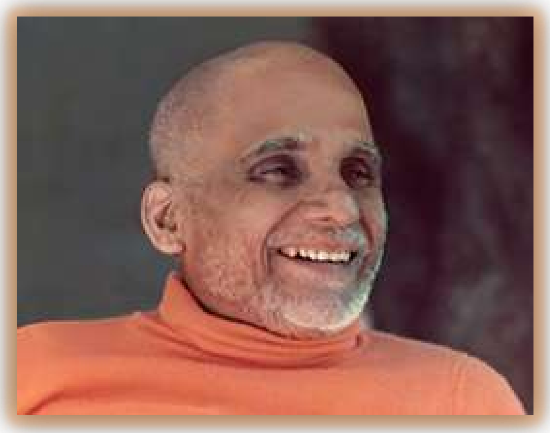
THE MĀNDŪKYA UPANISHAD



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ABOUT THIS EDITION

Though this eBook edition is designed primarily for digital readers and computers, it works well for print too. Page size dimensions are 5.5" x 8.5", or half a regular size sheet, and can be printed for personal, non-commercial use: two pages to one side of a sheet by adjusting your printer settings.

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PUBLISHERS’ PREFACE

The present publication consists of the lectures, delivered extempore, by the Swamiji, in the year 1968, on the philosophy and teachings of the Māndūkya Upanishad.

The First Section of the discourses expounds the meaning of the great mystical symbol, Om, or Praṇava, as a connotation as well as denotation of the Absolute.

The Second Section explains the nature of the Universal Being, Vaiśvānara, or Virāt, as delineated in the Upanishad.

The Third Section propounds the mystery of Dream and Sleep, as also the cosmic counterpart of this state, namely, Hiraṇyagarbha, the Divine Immanent Being.

The Fourth Section is an exposition of the profound significance of Sleep in the interpretation of the nature of the Spirit in man.

The Fifth Section is centred round the great theme, the nature of Īsvara, the Supreme God of the Universe.

The Sixth Section concerns itself with the majestic character of Reality as such, the Absolute, as the Transcendent Presence.

The Seventh Section is the concluding summary, devoted to an explanation of the harmony between the constituents of Om, or Praṇava, and the four states of Consciousness, which forms the subject of the Upanishad.

Herein, the students of Philosophy and Spiritual Life will find presented the quintessence of the acme of thought and experience reached in ancient times – the Upanishads.

—THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY
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INTRODUCTION

The theme of the Mandukya Upanishad is an exposition of the Mystic Syllable, Om, with a view to training the mind in meditation, for the purpose of achieving freedom, gradually, so that the individual soul is attuned to the Ultimate Reality.

The basis of this meditation is explained in the Vidya (meditation), known as the Vaisvanara Vidya. This is the secret of the knowledge of the Universal Being, designated as Vaisvanara. Its simple form of understanding is a transference of human attributes to the Divine Existence, and vice versa. In this meditation, one contemplates the Cosmos as one's Body. Just as, for example, when one contemplates one's individual body, one simultaneously becomes conscious of the right eye, the left eye, the right hand, the left hand, the right leg, the left leg, the head, the heart, the stomach, and all the limbs of the body at one and the same time, and one does not regard the different limbs of the body as distinguished from one another in any manner, all limbs being only apparently different but really connected to a single personality, so in this meditation, the consciousness is to be transferred to the Universal Being. Instead of one contemplating oneself as the individual body, one contemplates oneself as the Universal Body. Instead of the right eye, there is the sun. Instead of the left eye, there is the moon. Instead of the feet, there is the earth. Instead of the head, there is the heaven, and so on. The limbs of the Cosmic Person are identified with cosmic elements, and vice versa, so that there is nothing in the cosmos which does not form an organic part of the Body of the Virat, or Vaisvanara. When you see the vast world before you, you behold a part of your own Body. When you look at the sun, you behold your own eye. When you look above into the heavens, you are seeing your own head. When you see all people moving about, you behold the various parts of your own personality. The vast wind is your breath. All your actions are cosmic movements. Anything that moves, does so on account of your movement. Your breath is the Cosmic Vital Force. Your intelligence is the Cosmic Intelligence. Ycur existence is Cosmic Existence. Your happiness is Cosmic Bliss.

Though the Mandukya Upanishad gives certain symbolic instances of identification of limbs with the Cosmic Body, the meditator, in fact, can choose any symbol or symbols for such form of identification. The creation does not consist merely of the few parts that are mentioned in the Upanishad. There are many other things which may come to our minds when we contemplate. So, we can start our meditation with any set of forms that may occur to our minds. We may be sitting in our rooms, and the first things that attract our attention may be the objects spread out in the rooms. When we identify these objects with our Body, we will find that there are also objects outside these, in the rooms. And, likewise, we can slowly expand our consciousness to the whole whole earth and, then, beyond the earth, to the solar and stellar regions, so that, we reach as far as our minds can reach. Whatever our mind can think, becomes an object for the mind; and that object, again, should become a part of the meditator's Body, cosmically. And, the moment the object that is conceived by the mind is identified with the Cosmic Body, the object ceases to agitate the mind any more; because that object is not any more outside; it becomes a part of the Body of the meditator. When an object becomes a part of our own body, it no more annoys us because it is not an object at all. It is a subject. The object has become the Cosmic Subject, in the Vaisvanara meditation.

The Vidya has its origin, actually, in the Rig-Veda, in a famous Sukta, or hymn, called the Purusha-Sukta. The Purusha-Sukta of the Rig-Veda commences by saying that all the heads, all the eyes, and all the feet that we see in this world are the heads, eyes, and feet of the Virat-Purusha, or the Cosmic Being. With one head, the Virat nods in silence; with another face He smiles; with a third one, He frowns; in one form, He sits; in another form, He moves; in one form, He is near; in another form, He is distant. So, all the forms, whatever they be, and all the movements and actions, processes and relations, become parts of the Cosmic Body, with which the Consciousness should be identified simultaneously. When you think, you think all things at the same time, in all the ten directions; nay, in every way.

The Chhandogya Upanishad concludes this Vidya by saying that one who meditates in this manner on the Universal Personality of Oneself as the Vaisvanara, becomes the Source of sustenance for all beings. Just as children sit round their mother, hungry, and asking for food, all beings in creation shall sit round this Person, craving for his blessings; and just as food consumed by the body sustains all the limbs of the body at once, this meditator, if he consumes food, shall immediately communicate his blessings to the whole cosmos, for his Being is, verily, All-Being.

We may recall to our memory the famous story of Sri Krishna taking a particle of food from the hands of Draupadi, in the Kamyaka forest, when she called to Him for help, and with this little grain that he partook of, the whole universe was filled, and all people were satisfied, because Krishna stood there tuned up with the Universal Virat. So is also the case with any person who is in a position to meditate on the Virat, and assume the position of the Virat. The whole universe shall become friendly with this Person; all existence shall ask for sustenance and blessing from this Universal Being. This meditator is no more a human being; he is veritably, God Himself. The meditator on Vaisvanara is himself Vaisvanara, the Supreme Virat.

INVOCATION AND VERSES

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवा
भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः
स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवाꣳसस्तनूभि-
र्व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः
स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो वृद्धश्रवाः
स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्ववेदाः
स्वस्ति नस्तार्क्ष्यो अरिष्टनेमिः
स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः

Om! Bhadram karnebhih s’rnuyāma devāh
bhadram pasyemākṣhabhiryajatrāh
sthirairangaistushtuvamsastanūbhir
vyaśema devahitam yadāyuh
svasti na indro vriddhaśravāh
svasti nah pūṣhā Viśvavedāh
svasti nastārkṣhyo ariṣhtanemih
svasti no brihaspatirdadhātu
Om śāntih; śāntih; śāntih

“Om. Shining Ones! May we hear through our ears what is auspicious; Ye, fit to be worshipped! May we see with our eyes what is auspicious; May we, endowed with body strong with limbs, offering praise, complete the full span of life bestowed upon us by the divine beings; May Indra, of enhanced fame, be auspicious unto us; May Pūshan, who is all-knowing, be auspicious unto us; May Tārkshya, who is the destroyer of all evils, be auspicious unto us; May Brihaspati bestow upon us auspiciousness!
Om. Peace! Peace! Peace!

ओमित्येतदक्षरमिदꣳ सर्वं तस्योपव्याख्यानं
भुतं भवद्भविष्यदिति सर्वमोङ्कार एव
यच्चान्यत् त्रकालातीतं तदप्योङ्कार एव

aum ity etad akṣaram idam sarvam, tasyopavyākhyānam
bhūtam bhavad bhaviṣyad iti sarvam auṁkāra eva
yac cānyat trikālātītaṁ tad apy auṁkāra eva.

1. OM! This Imperishable Word is the whole of this visible universe. Its explanation is as follows: What has become, what is becoming, what will become – verily, all of this is OM. And what is beyond these three states of the world of time – that too, verily, is OM.

सर्वꣳ ह्येतद् ब्रह्मायमात्मा ब्रह्म
सोऽयमात्मा चतुष्पात्

sarvaṁ hy etad brahma, ayam ātmā brahma,
so'yam ātmā catuṣ-pāt.

2. All this, verily, is Brahman. The Self is Brahman. This Self has four quarters.

जागरितस्थानो बहिष्प्रज्ञः सप्ताङ्ग
एकोनविंशतिमुखः स्थूलभुग्वैश्वानरः
प्रथमः पादः

jāgarita sthāno bahiṣ-prajñaḥ saptāṅga
ekonaviṁśati-mukhaḥ sthūla-bhug Vaiśvānaraḥ
prathamaḥ pādah.

3. The first quarter is Vaiśvānara. Its field is the waking state. Its consciousness is outward-turned. It is seven-limbed and nineteen-mouthed. It enjoys gross objects.

स्वप्नस्थानोऽन्तःप्रज्ञः सप्ताङ्ग एकोनविंशतिमुखः
प्रविविक्तभुक् तैजसो द्वितीयः पादः

svapna-sthāno’ntaḥ-prajñaḥ saptāṅga ekonavimśati-mukhaḥ
pravivikta-bhuk taijaso dvītiyaḥ pādah.

4. The second quarter is *taijasa*. Its field is the dream state. Its consciousness is inward-turned. It is seven-limbed and nineteen-mouthed. It enjoys subtle objects.

यत्र सुप्तो न कञ्चन कामं कामयते
न कञ्चन स्वप्नं पश्यति तत्सुषुप्तम्
सुषुप्तस्थान एकीभूतः प्रज्ञानघन एवानन्दमयो
ह्यानन्दभुक् चेतोमुखः प्राज्ञस्तृतीयः पादः

yatra supto na kaṁ cana kāmaṁ kāmayate
na kaṁ cana svapnam paśyati tat suṣuptam
suṣupta-sthāna ekī-bhūtaḥ prajñānā-ghana evānanda-mayo
hy ānanda-bhuk ceto-mukhaḥ prājñas tṛtīyaḥ pādah.

5. The third quarter is *prājña*, where one asleep neither desires anything nor beholds any dream: that is deep sleep. In this field of dreamless sleep, one becomes undivided, an undifferentiated mass of consciousness, consisting of bliss and feeding on bliss. His mouth is consciousness.

एष सवश्वर एष सर्वज्ञ एषोऽन्तर्याम्येष
योनिः सर्वस्य प्रभवाप्ययौ हि भूतानाम्

eṣa sarveśvaraḥ eṣa sarvajñaḥ, eṣo’ntāryami
eṣa yoniḥ sarvasya prabhavāpyayau hi bhūtānām.

6. This is the Lord of All; the Omniscient; the Indwelling Controller; the Source of All. This is the beginning and end of all beings.

नान्तःप्रज्ञं न बहिष्प्रज्ञं नोभयतःप्रज्ञं न
प्रज्ञानघनं न प्रज्ञं नाप्रज्ञम् ।
अदृष्टमव्यवहार्यमग्राह्यमलक्षणमचिन्त्यम-
व्यपदेश्यमेकात्मप्रत्ययसारं प्रपञ्चोपशमं
शान्तं शिवमद्वैतं चतुर्थं
मन्यन्ते स आत्मा स विज्ञेयः

nāntaḥ-prajñam, na bahiṣ prajñam, nobhayataḥ-prajñam,
na prajnañā-ghanam, na prajñam, nāprajñam;
adṛṣtam, avyavahārayam, agrāhyam, alakṣaṇam,
acintyam, avyapadeśyam, ekātma-pratyaya-sāram,
prapañcopaśamam, śāntam, śivam, advaitam,
caturtham manyante, sa ātmā, sa vijñeyaḥ.

7. That is known as the fourth quarter: neither inward-turned nor outward-turned consciousness, nor the two together; not an indifferentiated mass of consciousness; neither knowing, nor unknowing; invisible, ineffable, intangible, devoid of characteristics, inconceivable, indefinable, its sole essence being the consciousness of its own Self; the coming to rest of all relative existence; utterly quiet; peaceful; blissful: without a second: this is the Ātman, the Self; this is to be realised.

सोऽयमात्माऽध्यक्षरमोङ्कारोऽधिमात्रं पादा मात्रा
मात्राश्च पादा अकार उकारो मकार इति

so’yam ātmādhyakṣaram auṁkaro’dhimātram pādā mātrā
mātrāś ca pādā akāra ukāra makāra iti.

8. This identical Ātman, or Self, in the realm of sound is the syllable OM, the above described four quarters of the Self being identical with the components of the syllable, and the components of the syllable being identical with the four quarters of the Self. The components of the Syllable are A, U, M.

जागरितस्थानो वैश्वानरोऽकारः प्रथमा
मात्राऽऽप्तेरादिमत्त्वाद्वाप्नोति ह वै
सर्वान्कामानादिश्च भवति य एवं वेद

jāgarita-sthāno vaiśvānaro’kāraḥ prathamā
mātrā’pter ādimattvād vā’pnoti ha vai
sarvān kāmān ādiś ca bhavati ya evaṁ veda.

9. Vaiśvānara, whose field is the waking state, is the first sound, A, because this encompasses all, and because it is the first. He who knows thus, encompasses all desirable objects; he becomes the first.

स्वप्नस्थानस्तैजस उकारो द्वितीया
मात्रोत्कर्षादुभयत्वाद्वोत्कर्षति ह वै
ज्ञानसन्ततिं समानश्च भवति
नास्याब्रह्मवित्कुले भवति य एवं वेद

svapna-sthānas taijasa ukāro dvitīyā
mātrotkarṣāt ubhayatvādvotkarṣati ha vai
jñāna-saṁtatiṁ samānaś ca bhavati
nāsyābrahma-vit-kule bhavati ya evam veda.

10. *Taijasa*, whose field is the dream state, is the second sound, U, because this is an excellence, and contains the qualities of the other two. He who knows thus, exalts the flow of knowledge and becomes equalised;

in his family there will be born no one ignorant of Brahman.

सुषुप्तस्थानः प्राज्ञो मकारस्तृतीया मात्रा
मितेरपीतेर्वा मिनोति ह वा इदꣳ
सर्वमपीतिश्च भवति य एवं वेद

suṣupta-sthānaḥ prājño makāras tṛtīya mātrā
miter apīter vā minoti ha vā idaṁ
sarvam apītiś ca bhavati ya evaṁ veda.

11. Prājña, whose field is deep sleep, is the third sound, M, because this is the measure, and that into which all enters. He who knows thus, measures all and becomes all.

अमात्रश्चतुर्थोऽव्यवहार्यः प्रपञ्चोपशमः शिवोऽद्वैत
एवमोङ्कार आत्मैव संविशत्यात्मनात्मानं य एवं
वेद य एवं वेद

amātraś caturtho’vyavahāryaḥ prapañcopaśamaḥ
sivo’dvaita
evam auṁkāra ātmaiva, saṁviśaty ātmanā’tmānaṁ ya
evaṁ
veda ya evaṁ veda.

12. The fourth is soundless: unutterable, a quieting down of all relative manifestations, blissful, peaceful, non-dual. Thus, OM is the Ātman, verily. He who knows thus, merges his self in the Self – yea, he who knows thus.

Om śantih; śantih; śantih.

Om Peace! Peace! Peace!

THE PRANAVA OR OMKARA

The Vedas, in their form as the Samhitās, constitute an introduction to the subject dealt with in the Vedānta or the Upanishads. The Upanishads are secret teachings containing wisdom beyond the realm of the earth and revealing proclamations of the great sages of yore on the nature of Reality. Among the Upanishads, the Māndūkya may be regarded as the most important, and it is aptly said – māndūkyam ekam eva alam mumukshūnām vimuktaye - for the liberation of the mumukṣhū or seeker the Māndūkya alone is enough; and if you are able to understand the true meaning of this single Upanishad, there may not be a necessity to study any other Upanishad, not even the Chhāndogya or the Brihadāranyaka, because the theme of the Māndūkya Upanishad is a direct approach to the depths of human nature. It does not give analogies, tell stories or make comparisons. It states bare facts in respect of man in general and Reality in its essential character. A very comprehensive Upanishad is this, containing only twelve statements called mantras, in which the whole wisdom or knowledge of the Upanishads is packed into a nutshell. The Upanishad commences with a prayer. All Upanishads start with a prayer – prayer to the guardians of the quarters, the deities or the manifestations of God, who rule the whole of creation, that we be blessed with health and understanding in order to go into the secrets of the Upanishads, to meditate upon them and to realise the Truth proclaimed in them.

The Māndūkya Upanishad is attributed to the revelation of a great sage called Māndūka. That which pertains to Māndūka is Māndūkya. The Upanishad or the secret teaching revealed to the sage Māndūka is the

Māndūkya Upanishad. It commences with a solemn declaration:

Ōmityetadakṣharamidam sarvam, tasyopavyākhyanam,
bhūtam bhavatbhaviṣhyaditi sarvamomkāra eva;
yaccānyat trikālātītam tadapyomkāra eva.

The Imperishable is OM, and it is 'all this'. Everything else, whatever be of the past, present or future, is like an exposition, explanation or commentary on the meaning of this great Truth – the Imperishable Om. Sarvam Omkāra eva: Everything is Om, indeed. This is how the Upanishad begins. *Ōm ityetadakṣharam idam sarvam*: All this, whatever is visible, whatever is cognizable, whatever can come within the purview of sense-perception, inference or verbal testimony, whatever can be comprehended under the single term, creation – all this is Om.

We have been reciting 'Om' many a time, and it is a custom with most of us to greet one another with Om, to recite anything with Om and start japa of any mantra with the chanting of Om. The implication is that Om comprehends all things and it makes also a very auspicious beginning to everything. OM and Atha are supposed to be two auspicious terms: 'Om, Atha; Om, Atha; Om, Atha; Om;' do we recite daily. In the beginning, Om is supposed to have been the first vibratory sound that emanated as the seed of creation. Om is Praṇava. It is a *bīja-mantra* for all the other mantras, whether *vaidika* or *tāntrika*. In the recitation of Om we comprehend not merely all meaning but also all language. All verbal implication as well as objective reference is included in Om. Om is both nāma and rūpa, name as well as form. It is not merely a sound, though it is also a sound, and a very important aspect of Om that you have to bear in mind is that Om is not merely a chant or a recitation, a word or a part of human language but it is something more than all this. It is something which exists by its own right, something which is usually called *vastu tantra*, as distinguished from *purușha tantra* – that which exists not because it has a reference to anything else but because it is something by itself. We do not create Om by a chanting of it, but we only produce a vibration sympathetic with the vibration that is already there by its own right and which is called Om. Om is a cosmic vibration. It is not a chant made by us, created by us or initiated by us. Why do we chant Om? To establish a connection between ourselves and that which exists by its own right and which manifests itself as a sound-vibration in the form of Om.

The Supreme Absolute is the *rūpa* (Form) of Om which is the *nāma* (Name). As everything in the world is designated by a name, we designate Īsvara, God, also, by a name. As we summon into our consciousness a form by calling out its name, remembering its name, so also we summon into our consciousness the Being or the Form of Īsvara, God, by summoning His Name. And just as the name of a particular object is connected with that object by a description of the character of that object, Om also, as the Name of Īsvara, describes Īsvara, and by this unique description of it, it enables us to contemplate the form of Īsvara. A mountain is a name, a river is a name, fire is a name, man is a name, woman is a name, Rāma is a name, Krișhna is a name; and so on, we have many names – *nāma*. These names correspond to particular forms which they connote and also denote. When you utter a name, the form corresponding to that name comes to your mind automatically, spontaneously as it were, because of a permanent connection that has been established between the particular name and its corresponding form. How much we are influenced by a name, every one of you knows very well. If you are called by a particular name, you may be pleased or displeased. There are names, by which you may be called, which may annoy you, put you out of your balance, because of the reason that you have created a permanent association in your mind between a particular *nāma* and its corresponding *rūpa*. For example, if you are addressed as 'mahārāj', you are pleased; but if you are addressed as an 'ass', you are displeased. The reason is the association that you have established in your mind and feeling between the name 'mahārāj' and its corresponding significance, or the name 'ass' and its corresponding significance. Names create vibrations within us. Suppose one of you suddenly cries out, 'snake! snake!' just now, you will all get up suddenly, and listen to nothing that I say. What sort of vibration it creates in your mind – the word snake! You have established a contact in your psychological being between the name 'snake' and its corresponding meaning or significance, and its connection with you. What it means, you know very well. Every name in the world has a form and a meaning attached to it. Every form is not merely a counterpart of the name with which it is connected, but it has a relation with other forms, as well.

Now, we come from what we call *Īsvara-sriṣhti* to *jīva-sriṣhti. Īsvara-sriṣhti* is the form corresponding to a name, as it is by its own right. *Jīva-sriṣhti* is the psychological connection that you have established between yourself and the corresponding form of a particular name. You are affected because of the *jīva-sriṣhti*, and your understanding of the form corresponding to a name signifies merely *jīva-sriṣhti*. We are now concerned not merely with *Īsvara-sriṣhti*, but also *jīva-sriṣhti*; perhaps with the latter we are more concerned than with the former because what binds us or liberates us is the nature of *jīva-sriṣhti*, not so much the nature of *Īsvara-sriṣhti*. Things as they are do not concern us very much. But things as they are to us mean very, much to us, and this meaning it is that binds us to what we call *samsāra* (earthly existence). Every name has a corresponding form, and the form is a content of *Īsvara-sriṣhti*; the creation of Īsvara, God; and you, as a *jīva* or an individual, though you are also a part of *Īsvara-sriṣhti*, create a cocoon round yourself, coil yourself in a web that has been created by your own imagination, and this imagination connects you with the other *jīvas*, other things, other contents of creation, socially. You do not merely exist as a content of creation; you also have a connection with other contents in creation in several ways. This is the difference between you as a part of *Īsvara-sriṣhti* and you as a centre of *jīva-sriṣhti*. You have an aspect of *Īsvara* in you, and you have also a *jīvatva* in you. The aspect of Īsvara is your dignified nature, and the aspect of *jīva* in you is what binds you to this realm of *samsāra*. So, you have a twofold nature, a double personality, a character that distinguishes you by means of your relation to Īsvara, and your relation to this earthly life.

This is the situation we find ourselves in through *nāmā* and *rūpa*, name and form, the designator and the designated, in this creation of which we are parts or contents. Now, it is the summoning of the forms into relation with ourselves that has been the cause of our pleasures and pains. Every day we summon into our consciousness different forms of the world, and this summoning is nothing but a psychological contact that we establish between ourselves and these forms. This is *samsāra*. Every relationship, external, is *samsāra*, and the whole life of ours, throughout the days and nights that we pass, all this is *samsāra* from which we seek liberation or freedom. We want *mokṣha* from *samsāra* and *mokṣha* is that status in which we establish ourselves not in a relation of *jīvatva*, but in the condition of *Īsvara*, that is, existence by its own right, and not existence by means of a relation to other things. You are something by yourself, independent of what you mean to others, what you may appear to others or what others may appear to you. You want to transfer your existence from *jīvatva* to Īsvaratva. You want to exist by your own right, in your own essential nature, to be independent rather than dependent on things. You do not want to think objects for your subsistence. You want to be absolutely independent as a *kevala*. You want to attain *kaivalya*. This is called *mokṣha* – absolute freedom.

This Upanishad, the Māndūkya, suggests a very simple method for the establishment of *jīva* in Īsvara, to transfer the relation of the personality to the non-relation of Īsvara and to achieve this by a direct method of invoking the presence of Īsvara, or Brahman, into our being, summoning Īsvara into our consciousness. Give Īsvara a place in your heart. Instead of thinking of an object corresponding to a particular name, think of Īsvara who is designated by a comprehensive Name. All the names of the world like mountain, river, etc. are particular names corresponding to particular forms. But Īsvara is not a particular form; He is a Universal Form, and therefore you cannot call Him or summon Him by a particular name. You have to call Him by a Universal Name, because He is Universal Form. No particularised language can describe Īsvara, because Īsvara is not a particularised object. He is not a man or a woman or a human being; He is not here or there; He is everywhere. That which is everywhere can not be designated by a language that belongs only to particular country or a man or a woman or a particular person. You require a very comprehensive language to describe the comprehensive Form of Īsvara. There is no comprehensive language; all languages are local. You have many languages, and there is no single language that can be applied to the whole world. And even if there be a language that can be valid for the whole world, even that is a local language from the point of view of the vaster cosmos. Is there a language that can be valid for the whole universe? That language alone can describe Īsvara, because He is Universal. There is no such language. The only language conceivable, revealed to the ancient riṣhis, is Om, or Praṇava.

The recitation of Om is the speaking of a universal language, a language which comprehends within itself all other languages; and the vocal organ, in the recitation of Om, or Praṇava, vibrates also in a very comprehensive manner. When you utter A, B, C, etc., a particular part of the vocal system begins to vibrate, but when you recite Om, the entire soundbox begins to vibrate. This is a matter for experiment. Anyone of you can experiment with it and observe the result. The whole soundbox begins to function, not merely a part of the soundbox; and all the languages are supposed to be contained in Om because of the fact that in the recitation of Om every part of the vocal organ begins to vibrate, and naturally every word, every phrase should be somehow included in the root-sound that is created when Om is chanted. Not merely this; the recitation of Om has another significance or meaning. The chanting or the calling out of a particular name produces a vibration in you. You have a feeling generated within you by the recitation or the calling out of a name. *Rasagulla, laddu, kheer*, coffee, tea, rice: these are certain names of certain objects, and you know that when you utter these names, different ideas occur to your mind and you have different sensations in your body. Scorpion: a different sensation; disease, ugliness, earthquake, atom bomb, war;—all these ideas produce vibrations in your system. They are not merely words; they are vibrations that are conveyed to your system by a particular word or a phrase; and Om is also a vibration, not merely a word or a sound. Om is a vibration, a Universal vibration with which creation commenced, as they say.

The Manusmṛiti, the Mahābhārata, the Purānas and the Upanishads describe the nature, the constitution, the structure and the glory of Om. With Om, Brahma created this cosmos, and from Om constituted of the three isolated letters A, U, M, the *vyāhṛitis* came forth: *bhūh, bhuvah, svah*. From these three *vyāhṛitis*, the three *pādas* of the Gāyatri-Mantra emanated. From the three *pādas* of the Gāyatri-Mantra, the meaning of the three sections of the Puruṣha-Sūkta emerged, and from the meaning of the Puruṣha-Sūkta, the meaning of the entire Vedas emanated, and from this vast meaning of the Vedas, Brahma created this cosmos, say the scriptures. So important is Om, not a chant uttered by Brahṃa, but a vibration that rose from the Supreme Being in the initial stage of creation – a comprehensive vibration. And when we chant Om, we also try to create within ourselves a sympathetic vibration, a vibration which has a sympathy with the cosmic vibration, so that, for the time being, we are in tune with the cosmos. We flow with the current of the cosmos when we recite Om, and produce a harmonious vibration in our bodily and psychological system. Instead of tearing ourselves away from the world outside, we flow into the current of the world. Instead of thinking independently as *jīvas*, we start thinking universally as Īsvara. Instead of thinking in relation to objects segregated from one another, we think in terms of nothing at all. There is thought thinking itself, as it were. Can you imagine thought thinking itself? This is Īsvara's Thought. When a thought thinks of an object, it is *jīva's* thought. When the, thought thinks only itself, it is Īsvara's Thought, Īsvara's Will and when we recite Om properly, with an understanding of its real connotation, we think nothing in particular. We think all things in general; this is Īsvara thinking. We do not think at that time; it is Īsvara who thinks through these individual minds of ours. We, as persons, cease to be for the time being. We exist as the thing-in-itself, Īsvara, who exists by His own stature, mind and status. He does not exist as a *jīva* in terms of other objects. We always exist in relation to something else. Īsvara exists with relation to nobody else, and we, as seekers of the status of Īsvara, or Brahman, wishing to exist by a universal nature, try, by this means of the recitation of Om, to flow into Īsvara's Being like rivers trying to flow into the bosom of the ocean. We are like streams wanting to rush into the sea, and just as by the force of the inclination of the waters, the rivers enter the ocean, we, by the inclination of the vibration of Om, enter the Universal Form of Īsvara.

When you recite Om properly, you enter into a meditative mood. You are not merely reciting a sound or a word or a phrase, you are creating a vibration. To point out once again; you are creating a vibration. What sort of vibration? Not a vibration which agitates you, irritates you, or creates a desire in your mind for a particular object, but a vibration which melts all other particular vibrations, puts an end to all desire, extinguishes all cravings and creates a desire for the Universal. As fire burns straw, this desire for the Universal burns up all other desires. A recitation of Om, even three times, correctly done, is enough to burn up all sins, to put a cessation to all desire and make you calm, quiet and satisfied within yourself. The test of a correct recitation or chant of Om is that you become calm in your mind and feel satisfied with what you are and what you have. When you come out of your meditative mood with a desire persisting, it would only point out that your contemplation has not been perfect. The desire for things was lurking within while you were in a mood of contemplation; even the chant of Om was not properly done. The chant of Om should go together with the thought of the Universal. It is a *japa* and a *dhyāna* combined. While other *japas* may lead you to a mood of *dhyāna* or meditation, while other mantras may lead to *dhyāna*, the *japa* of Om suddenly becomes *dhyāna* when it is properly done. Here, *japa* and *dhyāna* combine, and *nāmā* and *rūpa* are brought together. Here, you do not have a distinction between the designator and the designated, because the *nāmā* (name) which is Om, being Universal, merges into the *rūpa* (form) which is also Universal. There cannot be two Universals; there can only be one Universal. So the designator and the designated, in the case of Om, become one. *Japa* and *dhyāna* mean the same thing in the case of the chanting of Om. It is a sudden entering into a realm which the individual mind cannot understand. A rapture of ecstasy may take possession of you if you chant Om, thus. *Omityetadakṣharamidam sarvam* – Om is, verily, everything.

Om is imperishable. All name in this world is perishable, for it goes with the corresponding form. But this Universal Form is imperishable, this Universal Name also is imperishable, comprehends everything. *Omityetadakṣharam*: Om is *akṣhara*, and *akṣhara* is imperishable. *Tasyopavyākhyanam, bhūtam, bhavat, bhaviṣhyaditi sarvam Omkāra eva; yaccānyat trikālātītam* *tadapyomkāra eva...* All that was in the past, all that is now in the present, all that will be in the future, all this is Om, because Om has no past, present and future; the Universal has no time. What a grand description of Om is given in the Māndūkya Upanishad! Whatever is in time, as past, present and future, is Om. Not merely this; that which is above time, also, is Om. Om has a twofold nature, the temporal and the eternal: it is *śabda* and *śabdātita*. It is constituted of A, U, M, representing all creation; but it has also a fourth nature which transcends these distinctions of A, U, M. It is called *amātra* and *chaturtha-bhāva*: The soundless form of Om is *amātra*, the immeasurable, and it is not audible to the ears. This *amātra*, or the immeasurable, eternal nature of Om is not a sound or even a mere vibration, but it is just existence, pure and simple, known as *satchidānanda-svarūpa* – Existence-Consciousness-Bliss.

That which is past, present and future is the temporal comprehension of the gamut of Om, and that which transcends time is the eternal nature of Om. To give the analogy of the river and the ocean: the river is the temporal form, the ocean is the permanent form. There is a name and a form for the river, but there is no such name and form of the river in the ocean, as all rivers become one in the ocean. In the temporal form, Om may be said to designate all that is existent in creation; in its eternal form it cannot be said to constitute any kind of particular form, but it is formless, durationless and spaceless. Om, therefore, is name and form; form and the formless; vibration and Consciousness; creation and *satchidānanda*. All this is Om.

How to chant Om? This doubt may arise in your mind. We have tried to understand something about the magnificence of Om, but how are we to recite Om? Are we to think anything when we recite Om? The usual procedure prescribed is that the recitation of Om should neither be too short nor too long. There is a short, middling and elongated pronunciation, no doubt, but for all practical purposes of meditation, I would suggest that you may take to the middling duration of the recitation of Om. There is what is called a *mātrā* or a measure, and you may regard one *mātrā* as the time taken by the fist of the hand to go round your knee, in leisure, neither too fast nor too slow, and to snap the fingers. Take your hand once round your knee. This is the time taken for the measure called one *mātrā*. Bring the hand round your knee once and make a snap of your fingers. How much time have you taken? This is one *mātrā*. Bring it twice, these are two *mātrās*; bring it thrice, these are three *mātrās*. Now, when it is once, it is a short *mātrā*. When it is twice, it is a middling *mātrā*. When it is thrice, it is the elongated *mātrā*. You may choose whichever *mātrā* is convenient to you. There is no compulsion as to the measure. Whichever is convenient, practicable and agreeable to your temperament and capacity may be chosen by you as the required *mātrā* for the recitation of Om.

What have you to think when you recite Om? You are the ocean, and all the rivers of objects enter you. Remember the *śloka* of the Gītā: *āpūryamanam acalapratishtham*... etc. You are the ocean into which all the rivers of objects rush. There are, then, no rivers, no objects, you are the ocean. Imagine your feeling at that time, a feeling that I cannot describe. Each one of you should feel it for himself or herself. Chant Om, and entertain this feeling in your mind for even five minutes continuously, and record your experience in your diary, and tell me whether it has made any difference to you or not. Definitely, it will make a difference, and if God blesses you with the time and patience necessary to do this practice for even half an hour daily, you should regard yourself as a thrice-blessed seeker. The world enters you; and where is the world, then, to agitate you! *Samsāra* is a network of agitations, and all these are like currents of rivers rushing into your universal being. You have swallowed them up in the bosom of universality; and the roar of the river ceases when it enters the calmness of the ocean. The vexations of the world cease when they enter the solemn existence of your universality.

This is Īsvaratva, for the time being. This is the gateway for the *sākshātkāra* (realisation) of Īsvara, and if, for even half an hour daily, you are in a position to continue this chant and meditation – who knows, the bubble may burst one day! The bubble of *jīvatva* may open up into the ocean of Īsvaratva. Be prepared for this glorious achievement. And who can describe your majesty at that time! You will start shedding tears even by thinking of this condition. Tears will flow from your eyes; the body will tremble, because it will not be prepared for this experience. There will be *angamejayatva*, as Patanjali describes – a tremor of the body. The river is beholding the ocean: 'O, how big! How am I to go there? I have been a small channel up to this time. Now I am entering into something which does not seem to have a limit at all from any side.' Terror may take possession of you; hair may stand on end, and you may experience a thrill, as if an electric shock is being administered to you. These are the experiences you may have, commonly speaking. I do not mean that the same experience will come to every person, but generally speaking, with some difference in detail, this experience will come to everyone. And if, by God's Grace, the *prārabdha* is to come to an end, well, you may realise Him today. And if you enter into this *bhāva* or mood of *dhyāna* with a hopeful chant of Om, even hunger may be appeased, thirst can be quenched, and a weird strength will enter your body. You may have a feeling that you can even lift a mountain. You may not be able to do it actually, but you will have an inspiration and a sensation. Such strength may enter into your being, and if *sākshātkāra* comes, if there is real realisation, you may even do this feat. How did Lord Sri Kriṣhna lift a mountain! We cannot do it because we are *jīvas*, but Īsvara can do it. And it is not the *jīva* that acquires the *siddhi* or the power of working such exploits. The *jīva* is no more there. It is not you as a *siddha* or a yogin that do these marvels. It is Īsvara who does this through these instruments of His. Just as when you lift a small stone with your hand, it is not the hand that lifts it, it is you that lift it, so also, when a yogin does a marvel, it is Īsvara who does it, which, to the other jīvas, may appear as a marvel, because they cannot do it. For an ant, the man lifting a stone would be a marvel. We are all giants to the ant; and, likewise, to us, *jīvas*, the *siddha-puruṣhas* are wonder-workers. But it is a divine power that glories in all the *siddhas*. Just as the equalised bodily power works through a particular hand and raises a weight, for example, the harmonised Universal Power, which is Īsvara's śakti, works a miracle through a *siddha-puruṣha* or a *jīvanmukta*, which anyone of us can be, may be, any day. If we become instruments in the hands of Īsvara, that would be our blessedness; and when we become real instruments in the hands of the Universal Power, we become God-realised souls. We become divinities walking on this earth. We become *tīrthas*, or holy waters, ourselves, and this is *mokṣha* from *samsāra*, liberation from bondage, which is attained by a simple method, according to the Māndūkya Upanishad – a correct recitation of Om or Praṇava, with contemplation on its Universal Form which is Īsvara, or Brahman.

THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE ABSOLUTE

The first mantra of the Māndūkya Upanishad describes the nature of Omkāra and its connotation in relation to the whole universe. Now, it also denotes some object, as was pointed out earlier. It is a Universal Name which refers to a Universal Form in such a manner that the Name and the Form coalesce to constitute one Being. As the Name is Universal and the Form also is Universal, they have naturally to blend into a single existence, because we cannot have two Universals standing apart from each other. There is, therefore, the Universal Name coalescing with the Universal Form; *nāmā* and *rūpa* become one in this experience-whole. That experience is neither *nāmā* nor *rūpa*, by itself. It is both, and yet neither. God is not merely a form denoted by a name, nor is He an object that can be described by any person. As all persons are included within the body of God, there is no naming God by any other entity outside it. Hence, in a sense, we may say that God is nameless. Who can call Him by a name? Where is that person who can call Him by a name! As there is, therefore, essentially, no name, in the ordinary sense of the term, that can designate God, He cannot also be regarded as a *rūpa* or a form which corresponds to a *nāmā* or a name. There is an indescribable something which is designated ultimately by Omkāra or Praṇava, and, being indescribable, it is visualised by a name that conveys the best of possible meanings. Though it may itself have no name, and it cannot also be said to have any particular form, we, as *jīvas*, individuals here on earth, cannot envisage it in that transcendent nature. We have to conceive it in our minds before we can contemplate or meditate upon it for the sake of realisation. This meaningful and suggestive designation of that indescribable, transcendent something, is Brahman, the Absolute.

Sarvam hyetad brahma: All this is, verily, Brahman. Thus begins the second mantra. “All this creation is just the Absolute alone”, is the real meaning of this statement. All that can be regarded as what you call this universe is that Brahman. Etat vai tat: “This, verily, is that”: “That” and “this” are two terms demonstrating two separate entities, objects or things; “that” referring to a distant object and “this” to an object which is near. Now, “this” cannot be “that”, and yet the Upanishad proclaims, “this” verily is “that”; if “this” is “that”, if one thing can be another thing, then there are no two things. Where comes the necessity for these two demonstrative pronouns, “this” and “that”? By a process of definition called: *bhāga-tyāga-lakṣhana* (characterisation by division and elimination of certain properties), a reconciliation of these two suggestive terms, *etat* and *tat*, “this” and “that” is brought about. The famous example usually cited is of a person whom you might have seen in a distant place once, and whom you might now see near you in another place. *Soyam deva-dattah* – “This” is “that” Devadatta. That person called Devadatta whom I saw in a distant place, now I see here, near me, in another place altogether. The places are different; he might have even grown in age; he might be speaking a different language now; he might not even recognise me due to lapse of time; there is distance of space and difference in time, yet I recognise that person now. This, verily, is that person, *etat vai tat*. The reconciliation of “this” and “that” is done not by a unity of the two meanings of the pronouns “this” and “that”, but a unity of the single object which these two pronouns designate. “This” and “that” do not represent any object. They only indicate an object. These are indicative pronouns pointing out to an object, and the unity of the object is established by discarding the connotation of "that" as well as of "this". It does not matter if that person was somewhere else at one time and now he is in another place at another time; these distinctions make no difference to us in recognising the person. Spatial and temporal differences are abandoned for the sake of the recognition of the unity of the person who is the same always; then, as well as now, there as well as here. This very method is employed in understanding such Upanishadic statements as: *sarvam hyetad brahma*; a*yam ātmā brahma*; All this is Brahman; and this Ātman, also, is Brahman. Here you have; as it were, the quintessence of all Upanishadic teaching, the last word of the Vedānta, as you may call it, the culmination of the wisdom of the sages. This universe which appears to be proximate to our senses is that Brahman which seems to be distant or away from us, and this personality of ours which appears to be so proximate is also reconcilable with that Absolute which appears to be far from your reach. And, finally, on a consideration of the fact that every individual can make a reference to oneself as "this" and to Brahman as "that", and inasmuch as "this" is verily "that", all "this" also is "that". This personality, this individuality, this *jīvatva*, is ultimately unifiable with that Absolute, which is Supreme, but appears to be distant. If every individual is to make an assertion of this nature, the total "I" becomes reconcilable with "That" – "This is That". All becomes That – *sarvam hyetad brahma*.

How can many things be one thing, is another question. *Sarvam brahma*: All is Brahman. A multitudinous variety seems to be unified with a single entity. This is intriguing because we have never seen many things being equated with one thing. Many things are many things and one thing is one thing. The manifold variety of the universe is perceived by us because of the differentiating characters of objects. What about this differentia, then? What happens to the differentia when we try to identify all things with a single reality? Here, again, we have to apply the same method of *bhāga-tyāga-lakṣhana*, of shedding something and taking something else, in the act of understanding. Just as you recognise a person who was there and who is now here by a method of sublimation of characters, all this manifold universe is recognised as one single Being by the method of elimination of redundant characters which are not essential to the structure of the variety, which cannot be called the essence of the variety and which are only accidental to the particulars. That which is accidental is to be abandoned and that which is essential is to be taken. Brahman is essence and therefore it can be equated only with essence. The essential Brahman cannot be identified with the accidental attributes of the objects of the world. The name and the form, the structural distinctions that we observe in the things of the world are accidental in the sense that they persist only as long as there is space and time. As was pointed out in the first mantra itself – *yaccānyat trikālātitam tadapyomkāra eva* – Brahman transcends the three periods of time, and therefore all space. For this reason it cannot be said to have the characters of space and time.

What are the essential characters of space and time? They are distinction and formation, differentiation of one thing from another by attribute, definition, etc. Because of perception of specific characters called *viseṣhas*, we begin to distinguish one set of *viseṣhas* from another, calling each centre or set as an individual or entity. Minus these *viseṣhas*, these entities would vanish. We know water as drops. One drop is different from the other. When all the drops are one and there is no differentiating character between one drop and another, we call it the ocean. We, then, name it by a different epithet altogether. There is a merger of properties due to the overcoming of the difference of space and the barrier of time, in some sense, and in this merger of characters, there is no perception of variety.

There are said to be five characters in all existence: *nāmā, rūpa, asti, bhāti* and *priya*. *Nāmā* and *rūpa* are name and form. *Asti*, *bhāti* and *priya* mean existence, illumination and the character of pleasurableness. Existence, illumination and satisfaction seem to be permeating *nāmā* and *rūpa*, whatever be the place or the time of the *nāmā* and the *rūpa*. We are all constituted of *nāmā* and *rūpa*, name and form. Each one of us has a name and a form. Everyone has a name and a form. There is name-form complex and, therefore, the world is called *nāmā-rūpa-prapanca*, the network of names and forms. But, notwithstanding the fact that we are in a position to perceive only names and forms, and nothing beyond, we are impelled by the urge of something else beyond name and form, which fact comes into relief in our hectic activities of day-to-day life, wherein we express a desire not merely for name and form but for something more than name and form. Why do you act, why do you think, why do you engage yourself in any kind of work? There seems to be a purpose behind all these endeavours, and the purpose is not merely a contact with a name or form, but a utilisation of name and form for a different aim altogether. All our activities hinge upon a single objective, that is, relationship with externals, contact with objects; but for a purpose higher than the objects themselves, the putting into use or harnessing the object, including persons, for bringing about an effect which we regard as beneficial to ourselves. This effect is the final objective, and not nāmā and rūpa. You pursue in this world not some persons and things, but certain effects, consequences which you want to follow by your contact with persons and things. If these consequences do not follow, you reject the persons and things. It is not that you want persons or things; you want certain consequences to follow from the contact with persons and things. If they do not follow, you do not want them. Your friends become enemies or at least things of indifference when the consequences desired from them do not follow, and your desires become aversions when the required consequences do not materialise. So, it is not name and form or objects as such that we long for, but a desired consequence. What is that consequence?

The ultimate longing of all aspiring centres is to bring about a release of some tension. The release of tension of any kind is equal to pleasure. You are unhappy when you are in a state of tension, and you are happy when tensions are released. There are various kinds of tensions in life and every tension is a centre of suffering. There is family tension, communal tension, national, or international tension, which is usually called a cold war, all which place one in a state of anxiety and agony. The release of tension brings satisfaction and one works for that satisfaction. You want the tension to be released. But all these are outward or external tensions. There are inner tensions which are of greater consequence than the outer ones – the psychological tensions caused by a variety of circumstances: These circumstances in the psychic set-up of our personality form a network called the *hṛidaya-granthi*, in the words of the Upanishads. The Tantra *śāstras* and Hatha Yoga *śāstras* call this *granthi* by a threefold name: as *brahma-granthi*, *vishnu-granthi* and *rudra-granthi*, which you have to pierce through by the release of the *kundalini-śakti*. All this you might have heard and learnt earlier. This is the *granthi* of *avidyā*, *kāma* and *karma*, ignorance, desire and action; this is the tension of *vāsanās* or *samskāras*; this is the tension of the subconscious or unconscious mind; this is the tension of unfulfilled desires and frustrated feelings. This is 'personality' in its essential nature. We are a network of these tensions. This is *jīvatva*. What is the *jīva* made of? It is made up of a group of tensions. That is why no *jīva* can be happy. We are always in a state of anxiety and eagerness to find the first opportunity to release the tensions. The *jīva* tries to work out a method of release of tensions by what is called fulfilment of desires, because, ultimately these tensions can be boiled down to unfulfilled desires. It appears on the surface that by a fulfilment of the desires the tensions can be released and we can enter into *asti-bhāti-priya* by coming in contact with *nāmā* and *rūpa*. But the method that we adopt is an erroneous one. It is true that desires have to be fulfilled, and unless they are fulfilled there cannot be release of tension. But how are we to fulfil the desires? We adopt a very wrong method; therefore, we never fulfil our desires completely, at any time, in all the births that we take. The desires cannot be fulfilled by contact with objects, because a contact excites a further desire for a repetition of the contact which, again, in turn, excites an additional desire, and this cycle goes on endlessly – desire for things and things exciting desires, desire for things and things exciting desires. This cycle is the wheel of *samsāra*, again. By contact with things, desires are not fulfilled. On the other hand, desires are ignited, as it were, into a state of conflagration by such contact. Desires arise on account of an ignorance of the structure of things. Unless this ignorance is removed, the tension is not going to be released. And, what is this ignorance? The ignorance in the form of the notion that multiplicity is a reality; and that by an aggregate of all the finite things constituting the multiplicity, we can have the infinite satisfaction that we long for. A total of the finites is not the infinite, and therefore contact with finite things cannot bring infinite satisfaction. *Nāmā-rūpa-prapanca* is, therefore, not the way to the realisation of *asti-bhāti-priya*, which is what beckons us every day in our activities.

We want perpetual existence. We do not want to die. This is the sense of *astitva*, being, in us. We want to be called intelligent at least. We do not want to be regarded as stupid. This is the urge of *bhātitva* or *chit*, consciousness, in us. And we want happiness and not pain. This is the urge of *priya*, bliss, in us. The urge for perpetual existence, if possible immortal existence, is the urge of *asti* or *sat* – existence. The urge for knowledge, wisdom, illumination, understanding, information, is the urge of *bhāti* or *chit* – consciousness. The urge for delight, satisfaction, pleasure is the urge of that infinite delight of existence-consciousness, *priya* or *ānanda*, bliss. It is this threefold blend of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss that reveals itself even through *nāmā* and *rūpa*, and it is not the *nāmā* and the *rūpa* or the name and the form that we really want in our life. In our contact with things, or names and forms, we seek *asti*, *bhāti* and *priya*. We seek *satchidānanda* through *nāmā-rūpa*; we seek Reality in appearance; we seek the Absolute in the relative; we seek Brahman in all creation; we seek Īsvara in the world. That is what we seek. In all our activities, whether it is office-going or factory-labour, whatever be the work that we do, the purpose behind is the seeking for a final release of all internal tension and an acquisition of unlimited satisfaction.

So, *nāmā-rūpa-prapanca*, all this variety, this universe, is ultimately that Brahman – *sarvam hyetad brahma*. This unity can be established by the recognition of *asti*, *bhāti*, *priya* or *satchidānanda* in *nāmā-rūpa*, even as we find gold in ornaments. The form of an ornament is not a hindrance to the existence of gold in it. Whatever be the structural differences of the ornaments, gold is common to all of them. We may say, all these ornaments are gold. Is there any contradiction in the statement? Ali the ornaments are gold because the ornaments are made of gold. Likewise, all this is Brahman – *sarvam hyetad brahma*. The structural formations do not impede the recognition of the one essence in them. All earthen pots are made of clay. We may say, all these pots are clay; all the trees are wood; all the ocean is water. The difference is not, in these cases, an obstruction to the existence of the essence. The variety does not negate the essence. The variety also is the essence, and in the case of this vast universe of variety, we, therefore, need not be intrigued as to how this can be unified with That, how the proximate can be the same as the remote.

There are two aspects of the matter that we have to consider, namely, the substance of the universe, and the distances involved in the universe. The substances of the things of the world appear to be variegated on account of the forms, and not because of their essence. Take the case of a forest. One tree is not like another tree. Even a leaf in a tree is not like another leaf in the same tree. There are tall trees, short trees, thick ones, thin ones, of this kind and that kind. In spite of all this difference, all trees are wood. Whatever be the difference in the make of chairs and tables, all are wood. Likewise is the case with the things of the world. All things are substantially one, though structurally different. Now, this is one aspect of the matter. The other aspect is: why do they appear structurally different? This structural difference is an effect of the interference of space and time in existence. There is what is called ‘space-and-time’ which is something difficult to understand and which seems to be playing, a very important role, if not the most important role, in the interpretation of the things of the world. We do not merely see things in space and time. This is a very important aspect of perceptional psychology. We always engage ourselves with things, ignoring the fact of space and time involved in things. We may be under the impression that space and time are some non-entities, as it were, which can be ignored, and we are concerned only with things or solid objects. This is a misconception. Modern scientists will tell us how space and time are equally important, as important as the substantiality of objects, if not more important than their substantiality.

The substance and the structure of an object depend upon various factors associated with space and time. The location of the object, the observational centre of the subject and the relationship of the object to other objects; all these determine the structural nature of any single given object. Here I would advise you, if you so like, to study some of the discoveries made by modern science, especially physics. The objects are organically involved in space and time. They are not merely dove-tailed into space and time, externally or mechanically. It is not that objects are hanging in space, unconnected with space. No, says modern physics. Space and time are regarded as one, these days. It is not that space is one and time is another. They are two names for one continuum, called space-time continuum, and the things of the world are only modulations of space-time. Things in space, as they say, are certain structural differences in the continuum of space-time itself. Ultimately, we are told, there is only space-time, not even objects. and the so-called persons and things with which we are so much engaged are only space-time. We are hugging objects unconsciously without knowing what we are doing. So, even the structural differences are illusory, ultimately, and even the spatial and temporal difference is not valid, finally. Hence, substance is one, and the spatial and temporal differences get merged into this unity behind the variety. *Ekam sat vipra bahudha vadanti*, is the Vedic proclamation. The One existence is regarded as many by the great sages. They behold the One as many. Many names are given to the One. On account of this reason, because of the fact that the names and the forms which constitute the world are immediately resolvable to the structure of space-time, and finally resolvable to consciousness itself, *sarvam hyetad brahma,* all this universe is Brahman. It is God illumining Himself in His variety, in His glorious multiple Form.

Well, if all this is Brahman, it goes without saying that this so-called self of ours, also, is Brahman: *ayam ātmā brahma.* We need not, once again, explain this matter. It becomes clear because this self is also included in the All. *Sarvam hyetad brahma*: All is Brahman; therefore, *ayam ātmā brahma*: this Ātman is Brahman. Which self? This is another question. What is this self? We generally regard the self as constituting an animating consciousness within our body. We speak of 'I myself', 'you yourself', 'he himself', etc. Such terms are used by us in common language. Now, this self is the false self, not the real Self, because we have created a variety of selves by saying, myself, yourself, himself, herself, etc. This is the *mithya-ātman* or the *gauna-ātman*, the secondary self, the unimportant self, not the real or primary Self, or the Absolute Self – *mukhya-ātman*. If all is Self, because Brahman is Self, it is impossible to regard anything as an object. All objects, again, coalesce into the Subject, because Brahman is the Subject, the Seer, the *drashtā-puruṣha*, the final Beholder, the Consciousness that is at once the Seer as well as the seen. Brahman never becomes an object. If it is not an object, and if, also, all things are It – *sarvam hyetad brahma*, then all things should be the Self. There is, then, in this experience, a Universal Beholding, a Cosmic Seeing, which means seeing without an object outside the Seer. This is an uncommon way of perception, because, here, we have a perception without a perceived object. This is knowledge without a known. All becomes knowledge when there is no object outside knowledge, *jñānam, jñeyam, jñānagamyam,* says the Bhagavad-Gītā. It is knowledge as well as the known, that which is to be obtained by knowledge. It is the ocean of knowledge because outside it, there is no object. It is on account of this reason that we call it the Self or the Ātman. The nature of the Ātman is knowledge, not known-ness, not objectivity. This Universal Ātman is Brahman; not the individual *jīvātman*, but the Universal Paramātman is Brahman – *etad brahma*. This Brahman is the very Self which is Universal. To give a common analogy of the omnipresent space contained in a vessel: Space is universal, and it may appear to be limited on account of being apparently contained within the walls of a vessel, or a room. Can you say that space is limited because it is inside a hall? It is not really limited by the erection of brick walls, and when a vessel moves in space, we cannot say that the space also moves inside it. Likewise, the Ātman does not move, when you move. You may travel distances, but the Ātman does not move, because it is Universal; the

Universal cannot move – *sarvam hyetad brahma; ayam ātmā brahma.*

This Brahman, which is the Universal Ātman, is attainable by a process of personal experience. This process of experience by which we can attain the Ātman which is Brahman, designated by Om, with a definition of which the Māndūkya Upanishad commences, is a process of analysis and synthesis – *anvayā* and *vyātirekā* – of the Self, the Subject. As was pointed out earlier, we are not concerned with objects here, but with the Subject, because the Subject is the means of the attainment of Brahman. Why? Because Brahman is the Supreme Subject; it is not an object. We cannot reach Brahman through objects; we attain It through the Subject alone. So, the analytical and synthetic processes of experience, of which we are making a study in the following verses of the Upanishad, are of the Subject, the Self, and not of objects with which we are not concerned in this endeavour here, because objects are not, when we consider the nature of the Universal Subject.

This Subject, this Ātman, whose investigation we are to make now, is regarded as fourfold for the purpose of this analysis – *so'yamātmā chatuṣhpāt.* Four-footed, as it were, is this Ātman. What is this four-footed Ātman? Is it like a cow, with four feet? The four feet of a cow are different from one another by a spatial distinction among them. One foot of the cow is different from another foot. We can see the four feet of a cow separately. Has the Ātman four feet in the same way? What does the Upanishad mean by saying, *so'yamātmā chatuṣhpāt*, four-legged, four-footed is the Ātman? It is not true that the four quarters of the Ātman are like the four feet of a cow, but rather these are like the four quarters contained in a Rupee coin. You may say that the four quarters are contained in a coin, a Rupee, which you cannot see distinctly. The four quarters are in the coin, and yet they are not distinguishable. You recognise their presence, but you cannot behold them with the eyes. In this sense, we may say that the Ātman has four feet, and not in the sense of the four feet of a cow. The four quarters of the Ātman described in the Māndūkya Upanishad are the four aspects in the study of the Ātman, and not four distinguishable, partitioned quarters of the Ātman. These quarters, these four aspects in the study of the nature of the Ātman, which are the main subject of the Māndūkya Upanishad, are also a process of self-transcendence. The whole scheme is one of analysis and synthesis and also transcendence of the lower by the higher. This Māndūkya Upanishad itself is an exhaustive study of the Vedānta, because, in a few words, phrases or sentences, it states what our primary duty in life is. A transcendence of the lower by the higher by way of analysis, excluding nothing, but including everything, is the way to synthesis. We enter into an analytical process by self-transcendeace, because synthesis, by itself alone, is not sufficient. If you total up all particulars into a synthesis of unity, you may get the vast physical cosmos. You may think: this is Brahman. To remove this misconception, the Upanishad introduces the subject of self-transcendence. You have not only to total up the entire visible universe into a single unity and take it as one substance, but also transcend the nature of this total unity, because the physical character of the universe is not the essential nature of Brahman. Brahman is not physical, not even the universal physical which is the cosmos. So, we have to transcend it, step by step. Four steps are stated. These are the four feet referred to in the Upanishad, the four stages of self-transcendence.

We have attained to a unity by bringing together all particulars into the universal. Now we transcend even the universal physical for the sake of the attainment of the universal psychic or the astral; transcend that also, later, and then reach the universal causal; and transcend that, too, further, and reach the Universal Spiritual, the Spiritual which we cannot designate even as the universal. We have only to call it the Absolute. So, we have the physical, the subtle, the causal and the Spiritual. These are the four feet of the Ātman, or rather, four aspects of the study of the nature of the Ātman, four stages of self-transcendence described in the Upanishad. These four stages are called *jāgrat, svapna, suṣhupti* and *turīya* – the waking state, the dreaming state, the sleeping state, and the transcendent spiritual state. There are the four states of Consciousness, and a study of Consciousness is the same as the study of the Absolute or Brahman, because Brahman is Consciousness. *Prājñanam brahma*: Brahman is *prājñana* or Consciousness. A study of consciousness is the subject of the Māndūkya Upanishad – the four states of consciousness – the states in which the consciousness appears to be connected to certain temporary, accidental circumstances in waking, dreaming and sleep, and its pristine, purified state of Absoluteness. So, we have to take, one by one, the stages of waking, dream, sleep and the pure Spirit, or the Absolute, for the sake of attaining this self-transcendence. In this progress of transcendence of the lower by the higher, the higher does not negate the lower, reject the lower or abandon the lower, but includes the lower within itself by sublimation, just as the eighth standard is included in the matriculation standard, the matriculation standard in the graduate standard, the graduate standard in the master of arts, and so on. When you advance in the educational career, you do not reject the lower standards, but sublimate them into a higher condition. So is this process of self-transcendence. When you go to a higher state, you do not reject or abandon the lower, but the lower is contained in the higher in a transfigured form. The lower is there in its real value. When you wake up from dream, you do not negate the value or the substantiality of dream, but you sublimate it into a higher value in what you call the waking consciousness, so much that you are happier when you wake up from dream. You do not feel grieved that some dream objects are lost, just because you have woken up. 'O, why did I wake up! I have lost my treasure of the dream world'; you do not feel grieved like that. You only feel happy that the phantasmal worry has gone. You feel better, then. So is the grand process of self-transcendence and God-realisation in the end. The highest process of self-transcendence is that by which we attain God Himself, and the last thing which we attain is God-Being, wherein the world is not negated or abandoned, but absorbed into Its vitality, taken entirely into the supra-essential essence of God; and in God we wake up into a consciousness of Reality, just as we wake up from dream into this so-called waking world. God-realisation is an integrated consciousness where we gain everything and lose nothing. That is why it is said that God-realisation is the Goal of life, because when we attain God, we have attained everything. By knowing That, we have known all things. By acquiring That, we have possessed everything. And it is not a distant aim of certain people alone in the world, like Monks, the Brothers or Fathers or Sannyāsins; it is for humanity, for creation as a whole. It is creation that longs for God; not merely you or I. The whole universe surges towards God, which longing is expressed in the process of evolution. Why does the universe evolve? Because it is restless until it reaches that state. So, we are driven to that state of perfection, and this urge is the urge for cosmic evolution. God-realisation, therefore, is the Goal of life. *Brahma-sākshātkāra* is the aim for which we are here, and this is the finale of the process of self-transcendence described in the Māndūkya Upanishad.

THE UNIVERSAL VAIŚVĀNARA

This Ātman, which is Brahman, is fourfold, and can be approached and attained by a fourfold process of self-transcendence. We now propose to take up these stages, one by one, by way of analysis and synthesis. The first stage of approach, naturally, is that which pertains to the degree of reality presented before our senses. All successful effort commences with immediate reality. We, generally, say, 'you must be realistic in your life and not too much idealistic', which means that our life should correspond to facts, as they are, and we should not merely idealise or live in a world of dream. The mind will not accept what it does not see or understand; and no teaching, whatever be the subject of the teaching, can be undertaken without reference to facts, facts which are a reality to the senses, because, today, at the present moment, we live in a world of the senses. We cannot reject what is real to the senses, as long as we are confined to their operation. The Māndūkya Upanishad, therefore, takes this aspect into consideration and commences the work of analysis of the self from the foundation of sense-perception and mental cognition based on this perception. What do we see? This is the first question, and what we see is immediately the subject of investigation. Scientists are engaged in what they see and their enquiries and experiments are restricted to what is seen with the eyes. Science does not concern itself with the invisible, because the invisible cannot be observed and, therefore, cannot also be an object of experiment and investigation. What do we see? We see the world. We see the body. We do not see God, or Īsvara, or Brahman. We do not see Omkāra, Praṇava, the Creator, Preserver, Destroyer. All the things which we hear are not seen by us, and we cannot accept sermons based on invisibles unless a satisfactory explanation is offered first in regard to the visible. ‘Can you tell me what this is before me? Then I can accept what you say in regard to that which is above me.’ This immediacy of consciousness, this sensory fact which is presented to us in our day-to-day experience is comprehended within what may be called the waking life or jāgrat-avastha. All our life is confined to the waking experience, and we are not concerned so much with our experiences in dream and sleep as with those in the waking state. To us jīvas, mortals, individuals, humans, whatever is presented in the waking state is real, and to us life means just waking life. Our business is with facts presented in the waking consciousness. So we shall begin, first of all, with an understanding of the way in which we begin to know the world as it appears to us in the waking life.

The waking consciousness is the first foot of the Ātman, as it were, the first aspect or phase of experience that we are studying and investigating. The waking consciousness is *jāgaritasthānah*, that consciousness which has its abode in the wakeful condition of the individual. And what is its special feature? *Bahihprājñaah*: It is conscious only of what is outside, not conscious of what is inside. We cannot even see what is in our own stomachs. How can we see what is in our minds? We are extroverts, aware of only what is external to our bodies, concerned with things which are external to the bodies, and busy with those objects which are other than our own bodies. We deal with things, but all these dealings are with ‘other’ things, not with ourselves. This, is the peculiar structure of the waking consciousness which is engaged in action, and is busy with other things, but not with itself. We are worried over others, not ourselves. We are engaged in the study, observation, experimentation and dealing of other objects and persons; not ourselves. This is the peculiarity of the waking consciousness, conscious only of what is external. *Saptānga ekonavimśatimukhah*: Seven-limbed and nineteen-mouthed is this consciousness. It looks as if it is a Rāvana multiplied, with so many heads, as it were. Seven limbs this consciousness has, and nineteen mouths it has, and it eats the gross – *sthūlabhug*. It swallows, consumes what is gross. And what is its name? Vaiśvānara is its name. This is the first foot of the Ātman. This is the outermost appearance of the Ātman.

The Māndūkya Upanishad envisages the Ātman in this waking life, not merely from the point of view of the microcosm, but also from the standpoint of the macrocosm. Therefore, it is not merely an analysis of the self; it is also a synthesis of the subjective and the objective. From the point of view of the Upanishad, at least, there is no unbridgeable gulf between the individual and the cosmic, *jīva* and Īsvara, the microcosmic and the macrocosmic, *pindānda* and *brahmānda*. So, in the study of the waking life, the Māndūkya Upanishad brings about a harmony between ourselves and the world, *jīva*, and Īsvara, Ātman and Brahman, and this fact becomes known from the very definition of the first phase of the Ātman given in this mantra. The seven limbs of the first phase of the Ātman refer to a definition of the Cosmic Self given in one Upanishad and the nineteen mouths refer to the functions of the self in its capacity as an individual, isolated from the cosmos. That the waking consciousness is aware only of the external is one aspect of the matter, and this aspect or this phase of the function of consciousness in the waking life applies equally to the individual and the cosmic, and it is a common definition both of *jīva* and Īsvara, with a subtle distinction, of course, which we have to observe between the two. The *jīva* is conscious of the external, and Īsvara, also, is conscious of the external, but in two different ways. Both are *bahihprājña s*hall come to this point shortly.

The Mūndaka Upanishad has a beautiful mantra to which reference is made by the word, *saptānga* (*seven-limbed*):

Agnir mūrdhā, cakṣhuṣhī candra-sūryau, diśah śrotre, vāk
vivṛitāsca vedāh; vāyuh prānah, hṛidayam Viśvamasya,
pādbhyām pṛithivī; Eṣha sarva-bhūtāntarātmā.

This is the all-pervading Paramātman, residing in all beings: *eṣha sarva-bhūtāntarātmā*. Who is this Being? *Agnir mūrdhā*: The shining regions of the heaven may be regarded as His head. The topmost region of creation is His crown. *Cakṣhushi candra-sūryau*: His eyes are the sun and the moon. Diśah śrotre: The quarters of the heavens are His cars, through which He hears. *Vāk vivṛitāsca vedāh*: The Vedās are His speech. *Vāyuh prānah*: His breath is all this air of the cosmos: *Hṛidayam Viśvamasya*: The whole universe is His heart. *Pādbhyām prithivī*: The earthly region may be regarded as His feet. This is the Universal Ātman, from the point of view of the waking consciousness. This is the Virāt, or the Universal Person, who is sung in the Puruṣha-Sūkta of the Veda. This is the Virāt whom Arjuna saw, as described in the eleventh chapter of the Bhagavad-Gītā. This is the Virāt who was exhibited in the Kaurava court, by Sri Kriṣhna, when He went for peace-making. This is the Virāt which Yaśoda saw in the mouth of the baby Kriṣhna. This is the Cosmic Man, Mahapuruṣha, Purushottama, Virāt-puruṣha. He is also called Vaiśvānara, from the term *viśvā-nara*. Viśva is the cosmos; nara is man. He is called Vaiśvānara, because He is the Cosmic Man, the only Man in the whole cosmos. There is only one Man, and

He is this. We are reminded here of the opinion of saint Mīrā who is reported to have said that there is only one Puruṣha: There are not many men in this world. There is only one Man, and this is the Man: He is Vaiśvānara.

This is the cosmic description of the Virāt-puruṣha, and the Virāt is a name that we give to Consciousness as animating the physical universe. Just as we have consciousness animating our physical body, there is a Consciousness animating the physical universe. This vast cosmos; with all its stellar and planetary systems, with all its milky ways, with all its space-time and causal laws, is the physical cosmos, and this is animated by a Consciousness, just as our bodies are animated. This animating Consciousness is the *antaryāmin*, so called because of His being immanent in all things, hidden behind all things, secretly present in everything, whether conscious or unconscious. For this Virāt-puruṣha, there is no difference between living being and dead matter. There is no such thing as inorganic substance and biological stuff, the distinctions that scientists do make, because inanimate matter, the vegetable kingdom, the animal world and the human species are distinctions made on account of the observation of degrees in the manifestation of Reality, by us, as human beings. No such distinction obtains to the Virāt Himself. He is present in the inanimate as well as in the animate by means of what are called the *gunas* of *prakṛiti* – *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* – composure, activity and inertia – properties of matter. When He manifests Himself through *tamas* alone, we call it inanimate existence. Such objects as stone, rock, which, from our point of view, do not seem to have any consciousness animating them, are revelations of the Virāt-puruṣha through *tamoguna prakṛiti*, a quality of *prakṛiti* in which *rajas* and *sattva* are hidden, *tamas* predominating over *rajas* and *sattva*. When *rajas* and *sattva* slowly reveal themselves more and more in larger quantity and extent, there is animation, life creeps into existence, and from the inanimate we come to the animate. The first manifestation of life is through what we call *prāna* – the vital sustaining power in all living beings. While *prāna* does not operate in inanimate objects like stone, there is *prāna* functioning in the world of plants, vegetables, etc. Plants breathe; they do not merely exist like rock. But plants do not think as animals do. The function of thinking belongs to a higher order of Reality we call the animal world, with all its instincts and sensations. Here we have a still greater degree of the manifestation of Reality. There is an approximation to *sattva* in the human level, where we have not only functions of breathing and thinking, but also of understanding, ratiocination and logical discrimination. This is the condition of *vijñāna* as distinguished from *mānās*, to which alone the animal world is confined, and from *prāna*, to which alone the vegetable kingdom is constrained, and from *annā*, to which alone the inanimate world is restricted. But the *vijñāna* to which we have reached at the human level, the fourth degree, we may say, of the revelation of Reality, is not all. There is a higher step that we have to take above the human, beyond the *vijñāna*. That step which is above *vijñāna* or the human level is the realm of *ānanda* or divine delight. So, from *annā* we come to *prāna*, from *prāna* to *mānās*, from *mānās* to *vijñāna*, from *vijñāna* to *ānanda*.

This *ānanda* is equivalent to *chit* and *sat* – Consciousness and Being. All that was in the lower levels gets absorbed into this *ānanda*. Whatever meaning we saw in the inanimate level, in the levels of the plants, animals and humans, all this meaning is found in the level of Reality as *ānanda*; and here, existence, consciousness and bliss become one, while in the lower levels they get separated. There is only existence or '*sat'* in rocks, no *chit* and *ānanda*. Rocks exist, but they do not think; they do not feel; they do not understand; and do not experience joy. But a slow process of the revelation of thought-functioning takes place in the higher levels, until it reaches a kind of perfection in the human consciousness. Here we have *sattva* mixed up with *rajas* and *tamas*, on account of which we are very active; sometimes lethargic, and due to the element of *sattva* manifest as a fraction, we feel happy at times, though not always. But happiness at times is of no use, being undependable.

All our efforts in life are towards the attainment of a permanent happiness, which is the attainment of *ānanda*. For this we have to reach pure *sattva*, unfettered by the chains of *rajas* and *tamas*. These distinctions obtain in the realm of the *jīvas*. We see these distinctions; but the Virāt does not have these distinctions. To the Virāt, it is all 'I', without a 'he', 'she', or 'it'. *Aham asmi*, "I-AM" - is the awareness of the Virāt, while our awareness is "I am, and you also are, in addition to me". "I am, and the world is also there outside me". But, to the Virāt, the Consciousness is, "I am; there is no world outside Me". The whole world is 'I'; therefore He is called Vaiśvānara, the Cosmic Being, the Person who feels, and has the Consciousness that He is all-this-cosmos. According to the Upanishad, the description is as if He has seven limbs. He has, indeed, infinite limbs. Thousands of arms has He. He is Viśvamūrti, omnifaced is this Lord of the cosmos; and when we say He has seven limbs, we only give a broad outline of His Cosmic Personality, just as we can describe a human being as one with seven limbs – head, heart, arms, nose, eyes, ears, feet, etc. But if we give a more detailed description, we may go into the minutiae of the personality.

Now, while this Cosmic Person, the Virāt, may be regarded as the Consciousness of Universal Waking; we are also, in our work of analysis of consciousness in its first phase, concerned with the microcosmic aspect, the state of *jīvatva* – individuality. It is here that it is supposed to have nineteen mouths. Its mouth is the organ by which we consume things, take in objects, appropriate material by assimilation into our bodies, digest them into ourselves, as it were. This is the function of the mouth. The medium of the reception of objects into our own self is the mouth. In one sense, the eyes also are the mouth, the ears, are the mouth, because they receive and absorb certain vibrations through different functions. Vibrations impinge on our personality through the avenues called the senses, viz., eyes, ears, etc., and all these may be regarded as mouths; in this sense, everything that is cognised by the senses is *āharā* or food for this personality. Anything that we consume with our senses is *āharā*. *Āharā-śuddhau sattva-śuddhih*: When there is purity of food, there is illumination by means of *sattva* from within, says the Chhāndogya Upanishad. It does not mean that we should take only milk and fruits every day, which we usually regard as *sāttvica* diet, while we may think evil thoughts, see ugly sights, hear bad news, and so on. *Sāttvica āharā* is the purified vibration which the senses receive and communicate to the personality through all their functions, at all times. So, the senses are the mouths, and every kind of sense may be regarded as a mouth. There are nineteen functional apparatuses of this wakeful consciousness through which it receives vibrations from and establishes a contact with the outer world. What are the nineteen mouths? We have the five senses of knowledge, or *jñānendriyas*, as we call them: *śrotra* (ears), *tvak* (skin), *chakṣhus* (eyes), *jihvā* (tongue) and *ghranā* (nose). These are the five senses of knowledge. And we have the five organs of action: *vāk* (speech), *pāṇi* (hands), *pāda* (feet); *upastha* (genitals) and *pāyu* (anus). Then, we have the five operational activities through the subtle body as well as the physical body, which are called the *prānas*: *prāna, apāna, vyāna, udāna* and *samāna*. The five senses of knowledge, the five organs of action and the five *prānas* make the number fifteen. These fifteen functional aspects may be regarded as the outer core of individual activity. But there is also an inner core of our functions, which is constituted of the fourfold psychological organ, the *antaḥkarana-catushtaya*: – *mānās, buddhi, ahamkāra* and *citta* – *mānās*, or the mind, which thinks and deliberates; *buddhi*, or the intellect, which ratiocinates, understands and decides; *ahamkāra*, or the ego, which arrogates and appropriates things to itself; and the citta which is capable of performing many functions, the main feature of it being memory, recollection, retention of past impressions, and this is what is generally known as the sub-conscious level of the psyche. This is the fourfold *antaḥkarana-catushtaya*, as it is called, and with these four, coupled with the five *jñānendriyas*, five *karmendriyas* and five *prānas*, we have the nineteen mouths of the *jīva*, the individual. It is with these nineteen mouths that we come in contact with the world outside, and it is with the help of these that we absorb the world into ourselves. We communicate our personality to the world through these instruments, and we absorb qualities and characters of the world into ourselves through these instruments, again. These nineteen mouths, therefore, are the media or link between the individual and the Universe. How do we know that there is a world outside? Through these nineteen mouths do we apprehend all that is external. And it is not that we are merely aware of the existence of the world; we are also affected by the world; and *samsāra* is this process of getting affected by the world's existence, not merely a perception of the world. They say, even *maha-puruṣhas*, *jīvanmuktas* perceive the world, but they are not *samsārins*, because while they perceive the world, they are not affected by it. These *maha-puruṣhas* are in Īsvara-sriṣhti and not in *jīva-sriṣhti*. They do not create or manufacture a world of their own. They are satisfied with the world that is already created by Īsvara, or the Virāt, Vaiśvānara. This is the nature of the waking consciousness, both in its individual and cosmic aspects, as *jīva* and Īsvara. In its capacity as Virāt, it is *saptānga*; and as the *jīva*, it is *ekonavimśatmukha*, animating respectively the physical universe and the physical body.

What do the nineteen mouths of the *jīva* consume? Physical objects. What do we see? Physical objects. What do we hear? Physical things. What do we taste? Physical objects. And what do we grasp with our hands? Physical objects. Where do we walk with our feet? On the physical earth. What do we think in our minds? Physical objects. All the functions of ours through these nineteen mouths are connected with the physical world. Even the ideas that we may entertain in our minds are connected with physical objects. We cannot think only subtle things, because even the subtle things that we may try to think are only impressions of the perception of physical objects. We cannot think anything super-physical. We are therefore on earth, in a physical world, in a physical universe. Our consciousness is tethered to the physical body, and the counterpart, cosmically, of this physical consciousness, is Vaiśvānara. This is *jāgaritasthāna*, the waking abode of consciousness, waking in the sense that it is wakeful to the physical world, it is aware of the physical world, and it knows nothing other than the physical world.

We cannot know what is inside us, and we cannot also know what is inside the world. Now, to see what is inside the world is not to break the earth into pieces, just as, to see what is inside us, it would not be enough if we simply pierce the heart or break the body. The 'inside' is not to be taken in this sense. It is not the inside of a room, a hall or a house. This is a peculiar kind of 'inside' which we cannot easily understand, unless we think over it deeply. Even if we break through the body or split an object, we cannot see the 'inside' of the body or the object because the physical internality of the object is not the real 'inside' of it. Even that would be merely the physical part of the object, alone. What is the 'inside' of the object? The 'inside' is that which is internal to the physical aspect of the object, because even if the physical object is broken to pieces, we see only the physical parts of it. If we cut to pieces a human body, what do we see? We see the parts of the same body. We have seen the same physical stuff; we have not seen anything internal to the physical aspect of the body. The internal is not the spatial internality of any physical entity, but that power or force of which the physical body or the physical object is a concretisation or manifestation. The subtle body of ours, the astral body, is called, in Sanskrit, *liṇga-śarīra* or *liṇga-deha*. *Liṇga* is a mark, an indication or a symptom. The subtle body is called a symptom, an indication or a mark, because it determines the character of the physical body which is its manifestation. The physical body is nothing but the form that is cast in the mould of the subtle body. The subtle body is not visible to us, and it is internal to the physical body. Of course, there are certain things which are internal even to the subtle body, whose study we shall be making in the course of the study of this Upanishad. The internal structure of the body is not the physical structure. It is constituted of a different stuff altogether, called *tanmātrās, mānās, buddhi*, and the like. Tanmātrās are subtle vibrations that are inside physical things, and all physical bodies. The vibrations materialise themselves into forms, and in this sense the vibrations are called *nāmā*, and the forms *rūpa*.

The *nāmā* and the *rūpa* of the Vedānta philosophy, or of the Upanishads, are not the names and the forms with which we are usually familiar in our social life, but they rather correspond to what Aristotle called in his system, form and matter. Form, according to Aristotle, is the formative power of an object, and matter is the shape this power takes by materialisation, concretisation, etc. The subtle body may be regarded as the *nāmā*, and the physical body the *rūpa*. It is the *nāmā* or name in the sense that it indicates a form which is the object corresponding to it, namely the body. The *liṇga-śarīra*, the *sūkṣhma-śarīra* of ours, is our name. That is our real name, and if at all we name ourselves as Gopāla, Goviṇda, Kriṣhna, etc., that name which is given to us at the time of *nāmākarana*, the naming ceremony, should correspond to our character within. The name should not be incongruent with our essential nature. The real name is within us. It is not merely a word that we utter with reference to us. You may call a man, *kshīrasāgara-bhatta* (ocean of milk), but he may not have even a little buttermilk in his house. What is the use of calling a poor man as Daulat Rām? There are names that we give without any connection with the nature or the status of the person, and the internal structure of the subtle body. The real name, *liṇga*, indication, mark, is the *sūkṣhmaśarīra*, and it is the determining factor of the physical form, the body in which we are engaged.

This subtle body which is vibrant with desires, unfulfilled, puts on a form called the body, for the sake of the fulfilment of the desires. This putting on of a body is called birth; and birth cannot cease for us as long as the subtle body is not extinguished. There are births and births, as also deaths and deaths, processes of *samsāra* or transmigration, which are nothing but the effort of the physical body to find newer and newer avenues of satisfaction for the desires that are left unfulfilled. An infinite number of *jīvas* fills this cosmos. All these *jīvas* are animated by a consciousness that is common to all. This consciousness is; Vaiśvānara; but, individually, when this consciousness is considered in terms of bodies, it is called *jīva*.

While the consciousness in terms of the totality of all the physical bodies, inclusive of all animate and inanimate things, may be regarded as the Vaiśvānara, or the Virāt, the very same consciousness animating a particular body in the waking consciousness is called Viśva. The Viśva is the Ātman enlivening the physical body; Vaiśvānara is the Ātman reigning supreme in the physical cosmos. This is the twofold waking life, individual and the Cosmic – *jāgnritasthāna.*

Now, we consider the meaning of *bahihprājña*: outwardly conscious. While both the *jīva* and Īsvara may be regarded as outwardly conscious, there is a subtle distinction between them. The *jīva* is outwardly conscious in the sense that it is aware of things, substances, objects, outside it. But Vaiśvānara's consciousness of externality is of a different kind. It is a Universal Affirmation of 'I-am', 'I-am-ness', '*aham-asmi*'. This is the first manifestation of Self-consciousness – Cosmic *ahamkāra*. Therefore, it has no opposing objects in front of it. This *ahamkāra* does not wage a war with others. It has no misunderstandings with other persons or things, and it has, therefore, no pains of any kind. It has, also, no dealings with other persons and things, because it is Vaiśvānara, and not Viśva. We cannot even imagine this state of the "I-am-ness" of the Virāt. We have never been in that state, and so our minds are not capable of imagining that condition. To some extent, they say, this condition may be compared to the initial state of our becoming aware of ourselves immediately after we wake up from deep sleep. Generally, we do not think of this condition when we get up from sleep. We remain in a state of half-consciousness, and we plunge into our usual activities afterwards; so that we do not meditate upon this intervening period between deep sleep and waking consciousness in terms of the outer world. We have a subtle feeling of our 'being', before we become aware of the world outside. We are not asleep; we have woken up; and yet we are not fully aware of the samsāra that is outside us. This state of consciousness where it is aware that it is, and yet not aware that other things are, is the state of I-am-ness, *asmitva, aham-asmi*, that can be a feeble apology for Reality. A perpetual establishment of oneself in this consciousness would land us in the experience of the Cosmic. When this consciousness relates itself to other objects and persons, it becomes the individual, *jīva*. The *bahihprājñata* or the externality-consciousness of Īsvara is not a binding factor to Him, because of there being no dealings of this consciousness with outer things, while this *bahihprājñata* or externality-consciousness of the *jīva* binds it to what is called *samsāra*, and this bondage is due, not merely to its being aware of the world outside, but because of its evaluating the world, judging the world, wanting it or not wanting it in some way. There is no desire in the Virāt, while in the *jīva* there is desire. This is the only difference, if at all, between *jīva* and Īsvara. *Jīva*, without desire, becomes Īsvara; and Īsvara, with desire, becomes jīva.

So, this waking consciousness, *jāgaritasthāna*, which is externally conscious, *bahihprājña*, is cosmically *saptānga*, seven-limbed, and individually *ekonavimśatimukha*, nineteen-mouthed, and it is *sthūlabhug* in both ways, individually and cosmically. While in the case of the Virāt it is only an awareness of the physical cosmos, in the case of the *jīva* it is a desire for the physical objects of the cosmos. This is one distinction. While in the case of the Virāt the whole universe is comprehended in its consciousness, the *jīva* cannot comprehend the whole universe in its consciousness. It is related only to certain things of the world. While there are no likes and dislikes for the Virāt, inasmuch as everything is comprehended within its consciousness, there are likes and dislikes for the *jīva* because the consciousness of the *jīva* is particularised. We have no universal desire in us. There is no desire in us that can include within itself everything that is in the cosmos. Whenever we want something, it is only something in some place, differentiated from some other thing at some other place. We always create a bifurcation of things. We cannot take all things into consideration in our dealings of day-to-day life; even our judgments are affected by our partiality due to desires. We cannot be easily impartial, which means to say that we cannot take all sides of the matter when we judge things. Certain aspects always escape our notice, which vitiates our judgment. So, the *jīva's* judgment is erroneous, and, therefore, the world binds the *jīva*.

As you do not understand the world, and deal with it with this wrong understanding of it, the world will recoil upon you, and this recoiling is what is known as the effect of karma. While your dealings with the world may be called karma, the recoil of the world upon you is the effect of karma. The world will not redound upon you if you deal with it with an understanding of its real nature. But you deal with it with a prejudiced notion in regard to it, and with a subtle desire to utilise it as an instrument in the satisfactions of your desires. We should not use the world as an instrument for our satisfaction. If we try to use it in this manner, the world will try to use us, also, as an instrument. It will give us tit for tat. As we behave with the world, so the world will behave with us. We should not regard ourselves as the centre of the world, who should be served by the world. We cannot regard ourselves as masters and treat the world as a servant. If we put on this attitude of superiority regarding the world, the world will behave towards us in a similar manner, and treat us as servants, kick us now and then, and make us suffer, not merely in this life, but through a series of lives. This is the *samsāra* in which we are entangled. This is *jīva's bahihprājñata*, and its consequences.

Īsvara's *bahihvprājñata* is a liberated state. It is capable of being simultaneously aware of all creation, while we here are aware of a few things by succession. We cannot think even two things at the same time. How, then, to think of all things at the same time? While the consciousness of the Virāt is simultaneity of existence – therefore it is Omniscience, *sarvajñatva* – the *jīva's* consciousness is successive, operating by jumps from one to another, and so it cannot comprehend all things. It is *alpajña*, little-knowing. While Virāt is everywhere, *sarvāntaryarmin*, the *jīva* is *aikadeśika*, existing only at one place. We cannot occupy two seats at the same time, while Īsvara can occupy all seats at the same time. While the Virāt is *sarvaśaktiman*, All-powerful, Almighty, because of His simultaneous association with everything, the *jīva* is *alpaśakti* man, impotent, with no power, because he is dissociated from things. The power of the Virāt is not due to grasping things with His hands, but due to His being immanent in all things. His knowledge is insight, not perception. The consciousness or knowledge of the Virāt is an intuition of the whole cosmos, while the consciousness of the *jīva* in the waking state in regard to the objects is a sensory perception; it is not an insight. We have no insight into things, and we have no intuition of objects. Because of that reason, we cannot have power over things. We are weak in our wilt and in our body. We desire, but we cannot fulfil our desires, because of this weakness of ours. Our desires are our weakness; and the Virāt's strength is His desirelessness. The more you desire, the weaker do you become; the less you desire, the stronger you are, so that the highest state of desirelessness is the state of the Virāt or Vaiśvānara. It is here that the *jīva* transfers itself to Īsvara, and does not long for things, and so does not hate things. This mantra of the Māndūkya Upanishad is a description of the first quarter of the Ātman; the first stage of the investigation of consciousness in its relation to waking life, both individually and cosmically, called respectively, Viśva and Vaiśvānara, or *jīva* and the Virāt.

THE MYSTERY OF DREAM AND SLEEP

Hiraṇyagarba

The first phase of the Ātman, as the waking consciousness, has been explained. Internal to the waking consciousness, and pervading the waking consciousness, there is a subtler function of this very same consciousness, which is subjectively known as the dream-consciousness, or *taijasa*, and universally known as Hiraṇyagarba, or the Cosmic Subtle Consciousness. This is the theme of the description in the next mantra of the Māndūkya Upanishad, beginning with *svapnasthānah*, etc.

That which has dream as its abode is *svapnasthānah*. That which is aware only of the internal and not of the external is *antah-prājña*. That which has seven limbs is *saptānga*. That which has nineteen mouths is *ekonavimśatimukha*. That which absorbs only the subtle into its being is *praviviktabhuk*. This is *taijasa*, the second phase, the second foot of the Ātman.

Now we are in the dream consciousness, the world of subtle perception. We regard, usually, dreams to be consequences of waking perception, and it is held that the objects seen in dream are psychological rather than physical. We come in contact with real objects in the waking state, but we contact only imagined things in the dream state. While there is actual satisfaction, actual pleasure and actual pain in the waking world, there is an imagined pleasure, imagined satisfaction and imagined pain in the dream world. While the objects of the waking world are not our creation, the objects of the dream world are our own mental creation. This is the usual opinion that we have about the dream world in relation to the waking world.

The Māndūkya Upanishad goes into an analysis of dream and holds a conclusion which is a little different from the usual opinion that we have about the relation between the two states. We regard dream as unreal and waking as real. However, it should be obvious that this is not the whole truth. While we say that the dream world is imaginary in contradistinction with the waking world, we are not stating all sides of the matter. The dream world appears to be unreal in comparison with the waking world. The waking objects appear to be of more practical value than the dream objects, again, by a comparison of the two states. No such statement about the reality of the waking world in relation to the dream world is possible without this comparison. Now, who can make this comparison? Neither the one who is always wakeful can make such a comparison, nor the one who is always dreaming. That judge or witness of the two states cannot be confined to either of the states. Just as a judge in a court does not belong to either party contending, the one that makes a comparison between the waking and dreaming states cannot be said to belong to either of the states, wholly. If the judge of the two states wholly belongs to the waking state, he would be a partisan; and so, also, would be his condition if he wholly belongs to the dreaming state. What makes you pass a judgment on the relation between the two conditions of waking and dream? It is done because you seem to have an awareness of both the states, and you are not confined wholly to either of the states; and no comparison of any kind is possible, anywhere, unless one has a simultaneous consciousness of the two parties, two sides, or two phases of the case on hand. Now, we come to the interesting question: who makes this comparison? You can make a comparison between the two states through which you pass. Who is it that passes through the states of waking and dream? When you jump from waking to dream, you are not in waking; you are only in dream. And when you come from dream to waking, you are in waking, and not in dream. How can you be, simultaneously, in both the states? And, unless you have a simultaneous consciousness of two states, you cannot make a comparison. If you are entirely immersed in one state alone, then, no comparison is possible. But we do make a comparison, and pass judgments of value on the relation between the two states. This is indicative enough of a truth which surpasses common empirical perception. We are not that which is apparently related wholly to the waking state, nor are we that which is apparently connected only with the dreaming state. We are something different from the specific experiences of both the states. Neither can the waking experiences exhaust us, nor can the dream experiences completely comprehend our being. We seem to be something that is capable of being a witness of both the states. This witness is not a party either to the waking state or to the dreaming state. We are essentially, a third element altogether, something independent of waking and dream. What is that third element? This subject is the very purpose of the Upanishad, the core of investigation into the reality of the matter. Just as they appoint a commission when there is a complicated case for investigation, a commission wherein very competent persons are appointed, we seem to be under the necessity of putting ourselves in the position of a dispassionate commission of enquiry into the cases presented by the two states, waking and dreaming. We do not belong to the waking state, wholly; we do not, also, belong to the dreaming state, wholly. By a dispassionate dissociation of the judging consciousness from the experiences of waking and dream, we place ourselves in a situation where analysis is practicable.

When we judge the two states without any prejudice in our minds, the prejudice that waking is, perhaps, better than dream – without this prejudice, if we approach this matter – we arrive at wholly startling conclusions. Why do we say that the objects of waking are real? Because they have a utilitarian value. The food of the waking state, not the dream food, can appease our hunger of the waking state. That is why we say that the dream food is not real and that the waking food is real. But we forget that the dream food can satisfy our dream hunger. Why do we make a comparison of the two stales wrongly? We confine the dream food to the dream world and make a comparison of the dream hunger with waking hunger, not equally, also, making a comparison of the other aspect of the matter, namely the food aspect. If we say: we see people in the waking world in relation to whom we can speak and have dealings, in dream, too, we can have the same dealings with the dream people. We can shake hands with a dream friend, fight with a dream enemy, and experience even a dream death in a battle of dream. We can have a dream court case. We can have a dream property acquired after winning a case. We can have a dream office in which we may be big officers. We may become dream kings in a dream world. What is the difference, whether we are in dream or in waking, when the relations between us and the world outside us are the same in both the states? What makes you say that the dream world is unreal and the waking world is real? The comparison that you make is unjust. You are not a good judge of the parties, and so you pass partial judgments. Sometimes you pass ex-parte judgments, without considering the cases of the two sides. Now, here, the

Māndūkya Upanishad is not willing to accept the proposal of any ex-parte judgment. You have to dispassionately go into the root of the matter, and cannot take sides, either on the part of waking or on the part of dreaming. A philosopher said: If a king in the waking state is to dream for twelve hours every day that he is a beggar, and if a beggar in the waking state is to dream everyday for twelve hours that he is a king, what is the difference between the two persons? Who is the king and who is the beggar? You may say that the waking king is the real king. Here, again, you are making a wrong comparison. Such comparisons will not hold water, because they are prejudiced by partisanship. It is the waking mind that passes judgment on the waking world and says that it is real. It is like one party in a case saying, 'I am right', not considering the rights of the other 'party. The dreaming subject may make an equally valid assertion in relation to the dream world. You regard the dream world as unreal because you have woken up. When you are in dream, you never pass such a judgment. You are happy in dream; you laughed in dream; and you wept in dream. Why do you weep in dream if the dream pains are unreal? You may say 'it is a dream; why should I worry?' If you see a dream snake in dream, you jump over it, then. Why do you jump over the dream snake? It is unreal! You have tremor of the body. If a tiger in dream attacks you, you wake up with perspiration in the body. You may even cry, actually. This is possible. You may fall from a dream tree and have dream-breaking of the legs, and you feel real pain. Sometimes, the legs start trembling even when you wake up. You start touching them and seeing as to what has happened to them. You take some time to realise that nothing happened, and then say, 'I was imagining'.

A comparison justly made, dispassionately conducted, philosophically approached, between the waking and the dream states, will place you in a very awkward condition, so embarrassing that you will not know where you are. Are you waking, or, are you dreaming; are you possessed of a thing or are you dispossessed of a thing – this you will not know. And that, perhaps, the dream experiences are due to impressions of waking life does not make matters better. It is only a way of arguing. When you practically enter into the field of experience, you will find that this analysis, theoretically made, has not made a difference to your practical life. It may be that, if the waking impressions have created the dream world, the waking experiences might have been created by some other impressions. If, on account of the satisfaction that the dream world is only a creation of impressions of waking experiences, you regard dream as unreal, then you may regard the waking world, also, as unreal, because it is the outcome of some other impressions of some other experience undergone in some other state. If the dream world is the effect of a cause, the waking world, too, may be an effect of another cause. If the causal relation is responsible for your judging the dream world as unreal, the very same reason can apply to the conclusion that the waking world, also, is unreal. And, why do you hug the waking objects, rather than the dream objects? You do cling to dream objects, but you do not think of them when you wake up. If a comparison of the two states is responsible for your regarding the dream world as unreal, why do you not make a comparison of the waking world with another higher state? Why do you confine your analysis merely to the two states, waking and dream? What makes you think that there are only two states, and not more? Just as in dream you cannot make a comparison between dream and waking, you cannot make a comparison between waking and a higher life, unless you wake up from this life. While you are in dream, you think only of the dream world and you do not know that there is such a thing as waking. You forget all your empire of the waking world while you are dreaming. You are so much engrossed in the dream world that you are totally oblivious of there being a thing called waking life, and you eagerly go for the waking world when you wake up, but not before. If this is the case with dream, this is also the case with waking. If, in dream, dream appears to be real, in waking, waking appears to be real. Waking is real because you are awake, and dream is real when dream is functioning. While you are in a particular state, that state appears to be real. In the famous analogy of the rope appearing as a snake, the snake is not there at all, and yet you jumped in terror. The snake, to you, was not non-existent in the rope; it was there. You did not see the rope; you saw only the snake; and you say that the snake is not there only after seeing the rope. When you did not see the rope, you saw only the snake, and then you jumped. You should not say that the snake is unreal. If it was unreal, why did you jump? Why was there a real jump over an unreal snake? The snake was not unreal at that time. It was real at that time of its being perceived, and it became unreal when you saw something else, namely the rope. When it is seen, it is real, and it appears to be otherwise only when it is compared to something else that you see subsequently. If this is the way we judge things, then, why do we not judge the entire waking world in a similar manner? What makes us say that the waking world is real? It is the same thing that makes us feel that the snake in the rope is real. And just as we jump over an apparent snake, we are affected by the apparent objects of the world. Just as we get possessed of a feverish sentiment on account of the perception of the snake which was not there, we are in the agony of *samsāra* due to the perception of something which is not there. We should not say, it is there. If it is there really, then the snake also is there really.

The snake in the rope is a mysterious substance. We cannot say it is there, or it is not there. From one point of view it is there, because we really jump over it, and, from another point of view, it is not there, because it is only a rope. So is this whole world of waking. It is there as long as we see it, and we cling to it, weep over it and have various kinds of dealings with it, even as we have dealings with the snake that we see in the rope. But when we see another reality altogether, when light is brought and the rope is seen, the tremor ceases, and we sigh, 'there was no snake'. Likewise, we shall make a statement when light is brought before the world, not this light of the sun, electricity, etc., but the light of wisdom, insight or realisation. When this light is flashed before us, the snake of the world will vanish, and we will see the rope of Brahman. Then will we exclaim, 'Oh, this is all! Why did I, unnecessarily, run about, here and there?' As we speak now, after waking, in regard to the dream world, so will we say, then, in regard to this world, when we wake up into the consciousness of the Absolute. This, therefore, is the world in which we are living. We may call it real or unreal, as we would like. Both statements seem to be correct: It is true that the world is there, because we see it; and it is not really there, because it is sublimated in a higher experience.

This analytical understanding of the relation between waking and dream will be able to throw a light on the relation of man to God. What the dream subject is in relation to the waking subject, that man is in relation to God; and as the dream world is to the waking subject, so is the waking world to God. As the waking subject is the creator of the dream world, God is the Creator of this waking world. And what happens to you when you wake up from dream into the waking life, that happens to you when you rise from this world to God. Do you lose anything by waking? Then you lose something by realising God, also. But, if you feel that by waking up from dream you lose nothing, rather you become better, then the same rule applies to the state of God-realisation. You do not lose anything by God-realisation. On the other hand, you become better and get enhanced in being. While in dream you saw only phantoms, and in waking you feel that you see real things. In God you see things as they really are, rather than the phantasms that you see in this so-called waking life. This is the metaphysical analysis of dream experience in relation to the world of waking. The world of dream is not outside the mind; the world of waking is not outside the Absolute.

Dream is not merely a metaphysical problem; it is also a psychological occurrence. It is a reversion of the mind into its own abode, from the world of sensory operations. That is why it is called *antah-prājñah*, and *praviviktabhuk*. It is *antah-prājñah*, or internally conscious, because the mind can project a world in dream, independent of the operation of the waking senses. The eyes may be closed, but yet you will 'see' in dream. You may plug your ears and go to bed, and yet you will 'hear' in dream. Though the tongue does not actually work, you can 'taste' in dream. You can have all the sensory functions in dream, though the waking senses are not active then. The mind projects itself as the senses of dream and becomes capable of contacting dream objects which, also, are a partial manifestation of the same mind. The mind divides itself into the subject and the object, the seer as well as the seen. You are the beholder of the dream, and you are also, simultaneously, the world which you behold. The world of dream, together with the beholder in dream, vanishes, when there is waking, in which the dream subject and the dream objects coalesce, come together to form a more integrated consciousness. A similar union takes place in Īsvara-sākshātkāra, or God-realisation. The world that you see outside, and you yourself as the beholder of this world, come together in a Universal Consciousness. It is called omniscience or all-knowingness in almost the same sense that the waking mind can be said to be aware of everything that is in dream. The world of dream was not outside you really, and so also is the world of waking not outside God. And, just as you withdraw the dream-world into the waking mind, the waking world may be said to be withdrawn into the Cosmic Mind of Īsvara. And, individually, microcosmically, from the viewpoint of *jīvatva*, the dream experiences may be regarded as the consequences of the impressions of waking perception, that is, dream may be considered an effect of waking. But, it is a different matter altogether when you judge this condition from the point of view of the macrocosm. Even as you have the states of individual waking and dream animated by a consciousness called, respectively, Viśva and *taijasa*, there are, from the cosmic point of view, Virāt and Hiraṇyagarba, pertaining to the cosmic waking and cosmic dreaming states. While the dream world of *taijasa* may be regarded, tentatively speaking, as an effect of the waking world of Viśva, we cannot say that Hiraṇyagarba is an effect of Virāt. This is the difference between individualistic perception and Cosmic Knowledge. While Viśva may be said to precede Taijasa, Virāt does not precede Hiraṇyagarba. On the other hand, the reverse is the case in the cosmic state. The dream consciousness which is Taijasa has certain characteristics of Viśva, also. The subtle body has the same contour as the physical body. If the physical body is a form, the subtle body is the mould in which this form is cast. The subtle body has, thus, a reference to the physical body, and, almost in every respect, it corresponds in form, shape and structure to the physical body. This is why the words, *saptānga* and *ekonavimśatimukha*, are repeated, both in the waking and the dream descriptions.

The Viśva, or the *jāgaritasthāna*, is *saptānga* and *ekonavimśatimukha*; and so is *taijasa*, or the *svapnasthāna*. Hiraṇyagarba and Virāt seem to have the same structural formation, though hiraṇyagarba is subtler than Virāt. Hiraṇyagarba and Virāt are both cosmic, and their difference is one of a degree of subtlety, but not of structural formation. Hiraṇyagarba also would be beheld by us in the state of realisation as the Virāt only with the distinction that Hiraṇyagarba is subtler than the Virāt. The seven heads described of Viśva or Vaiśvānara can also be described as of Hiraṇyagarba or Taijasa. Taijasa individually and Hiraṇyagarba cosmically are *antahprājña*, internally conscious because of their objects being not physical but subtle, constituted of *tanmātrās: śabda, śparśa, rūpa, rasa* and *gandha*. Though waking and dream have their similarity of character in respect of *saptāngatva* and *ekonavimśatimukhatva*, the dream consciousness is *praviviktabhuk*, both individually and cosmically, it absorbs subtle things into itself in both cases. And that distinction we draw between Viśva and Vaiśvānara, we can also draw between Taijasa and Hiraṇyagarba. The relation between the Virāt and Viśva, and the relation between Hiraṇyagarba and Taijasa are the same. The dream world is very complex when it is judged from the point of view of the *jīva*, the individual; but it is simple from the point of view of Cosmic Experience.

Great analyses of the dream world have been made by psychologists and psychoanalysts, these days. Such scientific analysts as Freud, Adler and Jung in the West have come to the conclusion that dreams are due to certain complexes of personality, Freud attributing them to sex, Adler to inferiority feeling and Jung to a general urge for growth and harmony between the extrovert and introvert natures in us. The opinions of these psychologists are partially true, and we have much to learn from their discoveries. But they are not wholly right. The psychoanalysts have gone from the conscious level to the subconscious and to some extent to the unconscious level also, but they have not reached up to the spiritual level. To the psychoanalysts, there is no such thing as the Ātman Universal. Everything is mind – unconscious, subconscious or conscious. You may give some credit to the psychoanalysts in that they have gone deeper than the ordinary general psychologists who are restricted in their operations only to the waking world. The psychoanalysts discovered that there is something deeper than the conscious level in man, viz. the subconscious and unconscious, which are filled with complexes of various kinds. Our personality is more than what appears on the conscious level. Psychoanalysis has gone to the extent of holding the view that there is no such thing as freewill; because freewill is only as much real as the freedom of choice seen in a hypnotised individual. If the physician is to hypnotise a patient, the patient would act according to the will of the physician, not knowing that he has been hypnotised, and all the while feeling that he is acting according to his own choice or freedom of will. The psychoanalysts hold that we seem to have freedom in the same way, not knowing that we have been hypnotised by the impulses from within, the complexes of which we are made. There is no use saying that we are free. The patient also says that he is free. When he becomes healthy and recovers his normal consciousness, he may act differently. When he is freed from the clutches of the influence of the physician’s will, he will act otherwise, altogether. And so also we will not act in the way we do now if we are freed of the psychological complexes in which we are enmeshed these days, in the situations we are placed in throughout our lives.

Every human being has a complex; not merely one complex but several ones. Frustrated feelings become complexes, later on. In the beginning, you have a desire, and all desires cannot be fulfilled because of there being what the psychoanalysts call the ‘reality’ principle. There is the reality of society, the reality of the world outside, which opposes your desires. The society has a law of its own, which will not allow the expression of all individual desires. So, the individuals suppress the desires within by repressive activity. Repression and suppression are the mechanisms used by the mind to appear harmonious with the reality of society outside by putting on an appearance that is not real. When you suppress a desire, you become an artificial person. You are not what you are. And when you go on doing this for a long time, the suppressed impressions become complexes. These psychological complexes can, at times, become physical diseases. One may have such physical difficulties as stammering, deafness, blindness, loss of appetite, liver trouble, even lameness and similar physiological disorders because of the action of buried impulses, the complexes which have been created within by the storing in of repression for a long period of time. This, they say, we have been doing for years, and years, together, especially if we are to consider the incarnations that we have passed through, since many lives. We are a group of tensions, complexes, artificial situations. This is *jīvabhāva*, all artificiality, all difficulty, tension and suffering. This situation produces dreams for purpose of relief through fulfilment. The subtle desires repressed within manifest themselves in dream, when the will does not operate. The desires cannot all operate in the waking world, because the 'reality' is there, opposing them from outside. You cannot go on tom-toming your desires to people. They will oppose you, censure you and make your life hard in the world. And the desires, too, are very intelligent. They know where to express themselves, and where not. But in the dream world there is no such censure from the reality outside. There is, then, no will and intellect or ratiocination working, and there is only the instinct operating. You live in an instinctive world. Your real personality, at least partially, comes out in the dream world.

Dreams, therefore, are due to repressed desires. This is one of the causes behind dreams. This is the only factor that the psychoanalysts of the West emphasise. But Indian psychologists and psychoanalysts, like the *rāja-yogins* and the philosophers of the Vedānta, have touched another aspect of dream. The dreams may be, to some extent, of course, the results of complexes created by frustrated desires. But, this is not wholly true. Dreams may be due to other reasons also; one such reason being the working of past karma. The effects of past karmas, meritorious or unmeritorious, may project themselves into dream when chances are not given to them for expression in waking life. Also, a thought of some other person may affect you. A friend of yours may be deeply thinking of you; and you may have a dream of him, or you may have a dream with experiences corresponding to his thoughts. Your mother may be far away, crying for you, and her thought can affect you; you may have a dream. All this is equal to saying that a telepathic effect can produce dream. In the case of spiritual seekers, Guru's grace can cause a dream; and catastrophic experiences that one may have to pass through in the waking world may pass lightly as a dream experience by his grace. Due to the power of the Guru, one may have a dream suffering, instead of a waking one. If the disciple has to fall down and break his leg due to a *prārabdha*, the Guru will make him experience it in dream, and save him the trouble in waking. One may have a dream temperature, or fever, instead of a waking fever. One may have a calamity in dream instead of its coming in waking. This is due to the grace of the Guru. So, *śaktipata* can also be a cause of dream. All this the psychoanalysts of the West do not know. And, Īsvara's grace, also, can bring about dreams. God may bless you and give you certain peculiar experiences in dream. You may ask, "Why should they not come in waking? Why should the Guru work only in dream, and Īsvara's grace come only in dream?" The reason is that you oppose their function in waking life, due to the assertions of the ego. You counteract Īsvara's working and Guru's blessing by the action of your own egoism. But, in dream, the ego subsides, to some extent. You become more normal, one may say, and you approximate yourself more to reality, rather than to artificiality, in dream. Thus, it is easier for these powers to operate in dream than in waking. The opposing will of the ego, which functions in waking, subsides, to a large extent, in dream, and so there is a greater chance provided for the diviner forces to function in the dreaming condition. The physician puts the patient to sleep first, before the healing process can take place, because the ego opposes interference in the waking life, while there is no such opposition in dream and sleep. In hypnosis, the patient is put to sleep. The nerves must be soothed; the agitation of the mind should come down; the ego should not oppose the healing forces. Dream is helpful, in this way, for the operation of the higher powers coming from the Guru, or from Īsvara.

Dream, therefore, can have umpteen causes. Whatever the causes be, dream in the individual is regarded as an effect of waking, and is often judged as a consequence of impressions of waking perception and cognition. The world of dream being subtle, projected only by the mind, is regarded as *pravivikta*, *sūkṣhma*, non-physical – this is so both in the case of Taijasa and Hiraṇyagarba. While Hiraṇyagarba has Cosmic Knowledge, the *jīva* has no such knowledge, for the reason already explained. Hiraṇyagarba is Īsvara's form, and Taijasa is jīva's form. Thus is the twofold mystery which dream bolsters up before us.

CONSCIOUSNESS AND SLEEP

The waking world and the dream world, from the point of view of the jīva, are two aspects of the function of the mind. The mind projects itself in perception, both in waking and dream. The mind is active, and it gets tired of activity. It ceases from activity when it is too much fatigued. The complete cessation of the activity of the mind, due to exhaustion, is sleep, known as *suṣhupti*.

That is called *suṣhupti*, or deep sleep, where – *na kancana kāmam kāmayate* – one desires nothing, because the mind has withdrawn itself from both the physical and subtle objects. *Na kancana svapnam paśyati*: It does not dream also, because even psychic activity has ceased. *Tat suṣhuptam*: This is complete absorption of the mind into itself. But this absorption is of an unconscious nature.

The mind, while it appears to be a little conscious in dream, and more conscious in waking, is not conscious at all in deep sleep. This has given rise to an erroneous school of philosophy which concludes that consciousness is possible only when there is contact of the mind with objects. The *nyāya* and the *vaiśeshika* hold this view. Unless there is contact of the Ātman, they say, with objects, there cannot be knowledge. The real nature of the Ātman, while it is not in contact with things, is not knowledge, say the *nyāya* and the *vaiśeshika*. They are not right because they cannot explain how this unconscious element creeps into the state of sleep. The reason is not merely that consciousness has no contact with objects but that it has some other obstruction to the revelation of knowledge in deep sleep.

The third foot of the Ātman the third phase of its analysis, is deep sleep, where all perceptions and cognitions converge into a single mode of the mind –

ekībhūtah. It becomes a mass of consciousness, which is not projected outside – *prājñana-ghanah*. There is no modification of the mind, and so there is no external consciousness. We are not aware of the world outside in the state of sleep because of the absence of vṛittis, or psychoses, of the mind. Only when the mind becomes extrovert can it have consciousness of the outer world, whether in dream or in waking. But, there is no agitation of the mind, of that nature, in sleep. It is as if there is a homogeneous mass of all perceptions, where all the *samskāras*, *vāsanas*, commingle into a single mode, or condition, instead of there being many cognitive psychoses. *Ānandamayo ānandabhuk cetomukhah prājñah*: It is all bliss. The happiness of deep sleep is greater than all other forms of happiness or pleasure born of sense-contact. It is filled with *ānanda*, bliss, delight, satisfaction. Even a king cannot be happy if he does not have sleep for a week. All the worlds may be given to you, but if you will not be allowed to sleep, you would rather say, "Let me sleep. I do not want any world. You take your kingdom back, all your empire. You allow me to sleep peacefully." An empire cannot give you that happiness, the power which you may seem to have over the world cannot give you that satisfaction, which you have while you are alone in deep sleep, unbefriended, unprotected, unseen, uncognised, unpossessed of anything. While you are possessed of so many things in the world, with all the retinue of a kingdom, with the power that you wield in society, you have a satisfaction; but it is no comparison with the happiness of sleep, where you have no empire, no retinue, no power conceivable, and nobody even to look at your face. In that condition, when you are alone, you are more happy than when you are in the midst of people in the waking state. Just imagine your condition.

While you are alone, you are so happy, and while you are in the midst of many people, you are agitated, vexed, worried and complain about everything. You make no complaints in sleep, and you want nothing. Look at it! When you are fast asleep, you want nothing, you ask for nothing, you do not want anybody even to see you or speak to you, and, yet, you are more happy there than when you are an emperor. From where has this happiness come? From where has this *ānandamayatva* come to you? This subject is dealt with in the mantra which describes the third phase of the Ātman. Your real nature is aloneness, not sociability. Your real nature is *kevalata*, not *indriya-samyoga* with *vishayas*, objects. Your real nature is singularity, not multiplicity. Your real nature is a total transcendence of all sensory and mental phenomena, not contact with objects. Therefore you are *ānandamaya, ānandabhuk*: filled with bliss, enjoying bliss.

What do you eat in deep sleep, which gives you so much satisfaction? *Ānanda* alone is your food, not bread, *dal*, *kheer*, *rasagulla*, *laddu*. You get nothing of that kind in sleep, and yet you are more happy there than when you have a sumptuous dinner or a meal. All the luncheons of the world cannot give you that satisfaction which you have in sleep due to there being only the food of *ānanda*. You eat *ānanda*, swallow *ānanda*, consume *ānanda* and exist as *ānanda*. And, the Bliss of Pure Being is known as ānanda. This is what you enjoy in deep sleep. And when you get up from sleep, with what refreshment you come out! From where has that energy come to you? None was there to talk to you, nobody spoke to you, no one gave you anything, you possessed nothing, there was no property, you took no tonic; no nutritious food was there, and yet you came out of sleep with strength, well refreshed, and with a readiness to do more activity. From where did you get this power, this strength, this energy, this *ānanda*, this delight? Wonderful! You cannot answer this question. When you had nothing, when you possessed nothing, how did this *ānanda* come to you, and how did this power come to you? It came, no doubt, from another source altogether, which is not of this world.

Futile it is to run after the shadows of the world of objects. Foolishly you go to the things of the world which only tire your senses and drive you back to sleep, giving you nothing, giving you false promises, tantalising you, making you look foolish. This is the world; and yet, again and again, do you go to the world, forgetting what you saw in the state of sleep. We forget the sleep experience. This is the malady of all our waking toils. If you could remember what you had in sleep, you will never come back to this waking world of multiplicity. If consciousness were there in sleep, you would not like to return to this waking world. But you remain unconscious. So, you are driven back by an impulse of work, once again, to the waking world. Consciousness of sleep is equal to samādhi. If sleep is to be coupled with consciousness, it becomes *ātma-sākshātkāra*, the realisation of the Ātman. This is what they call Superconsciousness. This is *nirvāna, mokṣha, kevalatā* - Liberation. This is your real nature. This is why you are full of *ānanda* in sleep. You go to the blessedness of eternity and infinity in sleep, but you are not aware of it.

Ānandamayo anandabhuk cetomukhah: What is the instrument through which you enjoy this *ānanda*? Not the senses, not the mind. While there were nineteen mouths for you in the waking and dreaming states, there are no such mouths in deep sleep. Here, the mouth is not the mind or the senses, but consciousness alone is the mouth – *cetvmukhah*. Consciousness enjoys bliss. Who enjoys bliss? Consciousness alone, is the answer. It is *chit* that experiences *ānanda*, not the Indriyas or the *mānās*, the senses or the mind. In deep sleep there is only *ānanda* experienced by *chit*. You experience *satchidānanda*, here, Consciousness-Being, as such. But something else happens there, a very intriguing factor starts working, which covers the consciousness, and makes you come back to the waking life with the same foolishness with which you entered the state of sleep.

This is *prājña*, the consciousness which is in its own pristine nature, knowing everything and not being associated with anything external. This is the transcendent state in relation to waking and dreaming, the cause of all experiences in waking and dreaming, the *kārya-avasthā*, in relation to which waking and dreaming are effects, *kārya-avasthā*. In correspondence with this *prājña*, or the causal condition of *ānandamayatva* of the *jīva*, there is a Universal Causal Condition, known as Īsvara. While the waking consciousness, individually, is called Viśva, it is called Taijasa in dream, and *prājña* in the deep sleep state. Correspondingly, from the cosmic level, we have Virāt in waking, Hiraṇyagarbha in dreaming, and Īsvara in deep sleep. While we, ordinarily, hold that the impressions of waking create dream and an adjournment of all the activities of these impressions is sleep, thus deducing dream from waking and sleep from both, in the cosmic level we cannot make such deductions, because a reverse process takes place there which seems to be a prior condition to the individual state. Īsvara being the cause of Hiraṇyagarbha, and Hiraṇyagarbha being the cause of Virāt. The relationship between the individual and the cosmic, between Viśva and Virāt, Taijasa and Hiraṇyagarbha, Prājña and Īsvara is one of organic integrality, and a realisation of this organic connection of being will land the jīva in Īsvaratva and make it at once omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent.

THE GOD OF THE UNIVERSE

Īsvara

The third quarter of the Ātman, called prājña, is identified with the third quarter of the Universal Consciousness called Īsvara. Īsvara is omnipotent and, therefore, He is regarded as the source and the end of all creation. This *prājña* is the causal state of the universe, both outwardly and inwardly. Macrocosmically, we regard this consciousness as the Creator of the whole universe, while microcosmically, the very same consciousness is the creator of this internal world of the *jīva*.

This Consciousness as the cause of all things is also the Lord over everything – *eṣha sarveśvarah*. Now, this epithet *sarveśvara* as also the other qualification, *sarvajña*, omniscient, cannot be attributed to the *jīva*, because the *jīva* is not *sarveśvara*, and so not also *sarvajña*. The Māndūkya Upanishad seems to make no palpable distinction between the individual and the cosmic, and it harmonises the relation between *jīva* and Īsvara. The causal condition of the *jīva*, namely *prājña*, is regarded only as a part of the Cosmic Causal State of Īsvara. To this Upanishad, there is only one Reality, and the distinctions that we usually make between the Cosmic and the individual, between Īsvara and *jīva*, are overcome in the higher analysis of the Upanishad. It is all God, and God alone, Īsvara everywhere, and the *jīva* has no place to exist apart from the Being of Īsvara. So, when you describe the nature of God, you have also described the nature of all creation including the contents thereof, together with all the *jīvas*. We need not describe the drop separately when we describe the ocean; and so, the ocean is being described here, the ocean of causality that is designated as Īsvara, from whom proceed Hiraṇyagarbha and Virāt. *Eṣha* *sarveśvarah*: This is the Overlord of all; the Master of all things; supremely powerful. *Eṣha sarvajñah*: This Being is all-knowing, omniscient. Nothing can be hidden from the *perception* of this Being. Īsvara is omnipresent and so He is also omniscient; therefore, also, He is omnipotent. The All-pervading Presence of Īsvara explains His omniscience. The *jīva* is not characterised by this knowledge because of its being localised in spots in space, because of the mind of the *jīva* not being capable of moving outside its own body, because of our thoughts being confined to our personalities. We are, as *jīvas*, *aikadeśika*, present only in one place, while Īsvara is *sarvagata*, present everywhere. The 'knowledge of Īsvara is not a 'cognition' of objects, and no 'cognition' or 'perception' can be regarded as a part of omniscience, because the objects of cognition do not come under the control of the cogniser, necessarily. Though we cognise objects outside, we cannot be said to have a power over them, fully. We see the whole world with our eyes, but what power have we over the world. Our knowledge does not bring us power, though it is often said that knowledge is power. Knowledge *is* power, but not sensory knowledge. It is some other knowledge, altogether, that can be equated with power. *Sarvajñatva* becomes identical with *sarvaśaktimatva* only under a given condition, and not always. Though we may have vast knowledge in the sense of learning or information, we cannot be said to have power over the things or objects of this type of knowledge. While the *jīva's* knowledge is sensory, perceptual and cognitional, Īsvara's knowledge is intuitional. While the *jīva's* knowledge cannot be identified with the existence of its objects, Īsvara's knowledge is identical with the existence of everything. While '*sat*' and '*chit*' unite in the Being of Īsvara, they get separated in the case of the *jīva*. This is the reason why the *jīva* is neither *sarvajña* nor *sarveśvara*, the reason being that the world is outside the knowledge of the *jīva*, though the *jīva* seems to have a cognition of the objects by a process artificially brought about through the relation of space and time. The knowledge of Īsvara is above space and time, and is non-relational. The *jīva's* knowledge is relative; Īsvara's knowledge is absolute. Īsvara is, and His Being itself is all knowledge and power, while the *jīva's* being cannot be equated with knowledge and power. The *jīva's* existence is separated from its knowledge, and knowledge from power, while all these are one in the case of Īsvara. So, it is only Īsvara who can be called *sarveśvara* and *sarvajña*; and the Māndūkya Upanishad, while describing the third *pāda* or phase of the Ātman as the cause of all things and qualifying it with the epithets *sarveśvara* and sarvajña, obviously refers to the Universal Īsvara.

Eṣha yonih sarvasya prabhāvapyayau: He is the womb of all things. All things come from Him as the tree comes from a seed. The tree may be vast in its extent in space; yet, it is all hidden in its potentiality in the seed. The future structure or the shape and the nature of the tree is already determined by the content of the seed. It is not that some new thing comes up when there is germination of the seed. Whatever was in the seed, that alone comes out in the form of an effect, namely, the plant, and the tree. The universe is Self-determined in the sense that it is already contained and fully present in the Being of the Causal State, Īsvara. Thus, in a cosmic sense, we may say that everything is determined for ever. No change can be brought about in the cosmos by effort of any kind, because all the efforts are the activities of the *jīvas* whose existence and function are controlled by the seed, namely, Īsvara, from whom all this comes. Omniscience includes knowledge of the future, and if the future is going to be indetermined there cannot be any such thing as omniscience. We cannot say that the future can be changed by individual effort, and the so-called change that we try to introduce in the future is already known to Īsvara, and all our efforts of the future are determined by the Will of Īsvara. So, while there is freedom of choice from the point of view of the *jīva*, it is determination from the point of view of the Will of Īsvara. While we seem to change society, God knows already the changes that we are going to introduce, the 'why' and the 'how' of it. Thus, it is cosmic determination from the point of view of Īsvara, but from the standpoint of the activities of the jīva, it appears to be a process of change with an indeterminate future. God, Īsvara, therefore, is All-powerful, All-knowing, the seed of all things, the beginning and the end of everything.

Prabhavāpyayau hi bhutanām: Everything comes forth from Him and everything returns to Him, and everything is sustained, also, in His Being. Our movements cannot take us outside the Body of Īsvara. Even if we travel millions of miles in the distant space, to the stars, we are within the Body of Īsvara. We cannot go outside it. Let our thoughts, let the soul fly into the heights of the empyrean, or come down to the nether regions, it is within the purview of Īsvara's knowledge and is contained in the Being of Īsvara. Whatever be the freedom of the kite to fly to the skies, as long as it is tied with a rope to a peg on the earth, its movements are restricted. Our freedom seems to be within the radius of the operation of our *prārabdha-karma*, and beyond that limit we cannot go. We have freedom, but limited freedom, not absolute freedom. It is the freedom that a mother gives to her child. The child has a freedom, but within limits; beyond that the mother will not make any allowance. Īsvara gives us freedom in the sense that there is capacity in us to understand, ratiocinate and judge situations, but all these judgments are determined by the law of Īsvara, and we cannot overrule that law; we have to abide by that law. And, if our egoism so acts, occasionally, as to violate this law of Īsvara, then there is a reaction set up, and this reaction is what is called the law of karma. Karma that binds is nothing but the effect of the violation of the law of Īsvara, and abidance by His Will is unselfish karma. This is karma-yoga. When we abide by His Will, follow His law, and then act, we perform karma-yoga. But when we violate His Will and act according to the dictates of the ego, we perform a binding karma. Īsvara, therefore, is everything, the coming in and the going out of all things, of all beings. Such is the glory, the magnificence and the greatness of God, Īsvara, whose integral parts, organic limbs, are the *jīvas*, and all things, animate or inanimate. The distinction of living and non-living beings, the inorganic and the organic, do not obtain in the realm of Īsvara's Being. For Him, it is all Consciousness. There is no *jadatva*, or no dead matter, for Īsvara, because it is His Being. He permeates all things; He is *antaryāmin*. This is the Causal Condition of the universe, corresponding to which there is the causal experience of the *jīva*, called *prājña*. The individual causal state is *prājña*; the Universal Causal State is Īsvara. The individual subtle state is *taijasa*; the Cosmic Subtle State is Hiraṇyagarbha. The individual gross state is Viśva; the Cosmic Gross State is Vaiśvānara, or Virāt. Īsvara is often understood as that Total Being, in which all the cosmic states are united.

THE TRANSCENDENT PRESENCE

We have made an analysis of the three relativistic phases of the Ātman, both in its individual and cosmic aspects. But, Reality, as such, is neither individual nor cosmic. To say that it is cosmic is also to limit it to a certain extent, to bring it to the level of what we call creation. The Supreme Brahman, the Absolute, is not a cause, and not also an effect. It has no effects, and, therefore, it is no cause. We cannot call The Supreme Being as even a cause of things, especially when we consider that everything is identical with It. The Māndūkya Upanishad describes not merely the gross, subtle and causal conditions of the manifested consciousness, but also Consciousness, as such. There is something called Reality in itself, independent of relation. Even Īsvaratva is a description by means of a relation to the universe. We call God *sarveśvara, sarvajña* and *sarvaśaktiman*, because we relate Him to the creation. God is omnipresent, pervading everywhere, which means that we recognise Him in terms of space. He knows 'all' things, means that there are things which He knows; and He has power over all things, means that He can exercise power over something which is external to Him. All definitions, even the best ones, such as Creatorship, Preservership and Destroyership of the universe; omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence, are relative. They are *tatastha-lakṣhanas* of God, accidental definitions – not *svarūpa-lakṣhana*, the essential nature of Reality. What was God before creation? That would be His *svarūpa-lakṣhana* or essential characteristic. God, in His own essence, is something more than a Creator, Preserver or Destroyer, more than a cause of things, more than even an Overlord, All-knowing and All-powerful. What is that essential essence which is by its own right, and abides in its own Greatness, in its own Majesty? What is that Light which cannot be beheld by others, the Light which shines, but shines not upon anything? That is the state of Pure Consciousness, which is neither causal, nor subtle, nor gross. It is neither outside nor inside. It has no external nor internal. That grand Reality is described in the seventh mantra of the Māndūkya Upanishad.

This Absolute is known as the turīya, or the fourth state of Consciousness, transcending all relational manifestations – causal, subtle and gross. While the waking consciousness is external and the dream consciousness is internal, this Consciousness is neither external nor internal, because it is not either waking or dreaming. It is neither internally conscious nor externally conscious, *nāntah-prajñam, na bahih-prajñām* – not internal consciousness like dream, nor external consciousness like waking. One may think that it is a consciousness simultaneously of both the states. No; It is something different from a simultaneity of consciousness. It is not external, not internal, not a simultaneity of both, either – *no-'bhayatah-prajñām*. It is not also a mass of consciousness like a homogeneous heap of water in the ocean – *na prajñāna-ghanam*. It is not quantitative in its essence. Quantity is spatial, mathematical and Consciousness is not such. Hence, it cannot be called a mass of consciousness, also, because when you think of mass, you think of a heap, a body, indistinguishable, though. Not so is Consciousness – *na prajñāna-ghanam.* It is not featureless Consciousness without any awareness, *na prajñām*. You may think that it is awareness without an object before it. It is not even that, because the object is contained in that Consciousness. It is not Consciousness bereft of objects. It is Consciousness into which the objects have been absorbed. So, it cannot be regarded as a featureless transparency of an ethereal consciousness. It is not also absence of consciousness – *na-aprajñām*. It is not a state of inert perfection which the schools of thought like the Nyāya and the Vaiśeshika describe. It is not unconsciousness; it is not absence of consciousness; it is not bare consciousness; it is not a mass of consciousness; it is not external consciousness; it is not internal consciousness; it is not both-ways consciousness. What is this? Such is God in His essence, the Absolute in its True Being.

Adriṣhtam: Invisible is it. One cannot see it. Whatever be the effort of the eyes, the eyes cannot visualise it. *Avyavāharayam*: One cannot have any kind of dealings with it. You cannot touch it; you cannot grasp it; you cannot talk to it; you cannot see it; you cannot hear it. No kind of business can be established with it. You cannot have a relationship with it. It is unrelated; non-relational is it. It repels all relation. It is neither friendly nor inimical. Such is the mystery of the Being of all beings. *Agrāhyam*: It is not graspable by the power of the senses. You cannot catch it with the hands, smell it with the nose, taste it with the tongue, hear it with the ears, see it with the eyes. No such thing is possible. *Alakṣhanam*: And, therefore, indefinable is it. You cannot describe it. No definition of it is possible, because what is definition but an association of qualities which you have seen, heard, etc.? But here is something which you have not seen, which you have not heard of; how can you have a characterisation of it? There is, thus, no definition of this Being of beings. No one can say anything about it. *Acintyam*: It is unthinkable by the mind. You cannot form a thought of this Being. You cannot, therefore, meditate upon it in the usual manner. You cannot think it, because to think would be to bring the object to the realm of space and time, to externalise it. It is not an object, and it is not in space and time, and, so, it is not thinkable. *Avyapadeśyam*: Indescribable, ineffable is it. You cannot speak its glory with your tongue. No scripture can describe it; no saint can explain it. Not even the wisdom of the sages put together can be adequate to its greatness. It is beyond all the wisdom of the sages, and it is peerless, incomparable. This character of the Being of this Reality is due to the fact that it cannot be referred to by anyone else. This world is a network of references. One thing is referred to the other for the purpose of definition, understanding and dealing. The whole world of business is a realm of references made to 'others'. Here, however, no such reference is possible. It is a silence of all activity, both of the body and of the mind.

Ekātmapratyayasāram: Here, we have a wonderful characterisation of the Ātman. The Ātman can be defined only as the Ātman. You cannot define it by any other form or concept. It is said that the battle between Rāma and Rāvana was incomparable. To what can you compare the battle between Rāma and Rāvana? You can say that something is vast like the ocean, endless like the sky, bright like the sun, sweet like sugar. But, like what was the battle between Rāma and Rāvana? It was like the battle between Rāma and Rāvana! This was all that the poet could say. "Space is like space, ocean is like ocean, and the Rāma-Rāvana-battle was like the Rāma-Rāvana-battle." So, also, is the Ātman. The Ātman is like the Ātman. You cannot say that the Ātman is like this, or that, because it is incomparable, and any comparison attempted would be a reference made to something that has come out afterwards as an effect. That would be a travesty of affairs, indeed. Therefore, it can be designated only as *ekātmapratyayasāram*, the Essence of the consciousness of Selfhood and Oneness. It is, if at all, definable by three interesting terms – *ekatva* (Oneness), *ātmatva* (Selfhood) and *sāratva* (Essentiality). It is the essence of all things, and it is One, and it is the Self. It is the Self, and, therefore, it can only be One. It is the Self, and, therefore, it is the Essence. The Self is that which knows itself, not by a means but by its own existence. It is Existence knowing itself without any external proof. Perception, inference, verbal testimony, comparison, etc. do not apply here in the case of the knowledge of the Ātman. It cannot be inferred by logic, induction or deduction, and it cannot he perceived, it cannot be compared, it cannot be described by words. It is the Self, which means that it is not beheld by someone else. The Self is beheld by itself alone. Here, Self and Existence mean one and the same thing. Existence is Self; Existence is the Ātman. The Self is non-objectifiable, non-alienable from its own essence. The knowledge of the Ātman is intuition, which is a non-relational apprehension of Reality, independent of the operation of the senses and the mind, where existence becomes identical with knowledge, and knowledge is one with the known. Here the object of knowledge is the same as knowledge and intuition. When the object stands outside knowledge, it is called perception. This is the difference between intuition and sensory cognition or information. Where the object stands in an immediacy of relation with knowledge, it is intuition. One cannot say whether it is the object that knows itself or the knowledge that knows itself. The difference between their characters vanishes as when two oceans join together. The knowing subject and the object of its knowledge come together in a single coalescence of Being. This is *ātmatva* - Selfhood.

Salila eko drashtā, says Yājnavalkya in the Brihadāranayaka Upanishad. The Ātman is like an oceanic flood without a surface or a limit. The Ātman is the sole Seer, Knower, Beholder, Experiencer, without a counterpart objective to it. It knows itself, not 'others', for the 'others' are also a part of itself. Hence, knowledge of the Ātman is the knowledge of the whole of existence. It is not knowledge of this Ātman, that Ātman, this Self, that self, this person, that person. It is the knowledge of The Ātman, which can only be One. The Ātman is single – *ekātmapratyayasāram*. The One Ātman is called the *paramātman* as distinguished from the multitudinousness of the so-called Ātmans, called *jīvātmans*. It is *paramātman*, because it is the Supreme Self. *Brahmeti paramātmeti bhagavāniti śabdyat*, says the Śrimad-Bhāgavata. From the absolute, universal and personal standpoints, it is called Brahman, Paramātman and Bhagavān. In itself it is Brahman, the Absolute; and as the Supreme Creator, Preserver, Destroyer, it is the Paramātman; as the Beloved of devotees, it is Bhagavān. It is all this – Dvaita, Viśishtādvaita and Advaita points of view come together here in this Ātman, and the conclusions of the schools of thought merge into the single truth of a blend of various standpoints. Quarrels cease, arguments come to a stop, philosophies are hushed, silence prevails. This Ātman is Silence, said a great Master. When a devotee came, and asked the Guru, 'Tell me the Ātman', the Guru kept quiet. When the disciple queried again, 'Master, tell me the Ātman', the Guru kept quiet, again. A third time the question was raised, and the Guru kept quiet, once more. When for the fourth time the disciple put the same question, 'Tell me the Ātman'; the Guru said, 'I am telling you, you are not hearing; because Silence is the Ātman'. In that Great Silence, all the turmoil of the cosmos is calmed. All the clamour of the senses, all the noise of the universe is contained and absorbed in this

Silence. The Silence here is better than all the sounds that one makes, and it explains things better than all the speeches that one utters. This Silence is a fuller explanation than all the logical arguments of the philosophers. This Silence of all silences connotes Reality in a more comprehensive manner, than anything else, because when we express it in words, we come down from its level to a lower grade, and begin to think of it as an external object. The Kena Upanishad warns us when it says, "It is not known to those who know it; it is known to those who do not know it". If you think you know it, you do not know it, and when you know it, you do not think, but you simply *are*. You have *become* That, and you *are* That; and that is real knowledge. Knowledge is not expression, but Being. It is not becoming or a process. It is called *sattā-sāmānya*, in the language of the Yoga Vāsiṣhtha, the General Existence of all things, as distinguished from the particular existences of bodies, minds and individuals. It is the Transcendent Being, which cannot be called either as this or that. It is neither *sat* (existence) nor *asat* (non-existence) in the ordinary sense of the term. It is not sat or existence in the sense of some object being there. It is not *asat* or non-existence, also. We say that something is, because we see it; we can think of it; we can hear it; we can catch it with our hands. And, Reality is not such a type of existence. But, thereby, you cannot say that it is non-existence. It is beyond *sat* (existence) and *asat* (non-existence). *Anādimat param brahma na sat tan na-asad ucyate*, says the Bhagavad Gītā. This Brahman, the Origin of all things is non-temporal eternity. *Na asad āsīt no sad āsīt*, says the Rig Veda. What was there in the beginning? Not existence, not non-existence. Definitions are given by persons, and all persons who give a definition of Reality came afterwards as an effect. Who is to define that which was prior even to the cause of all things, antecedent even to the condition of Īsvara? Who can describe it, and what can you say about it except only characterising it, tentatively, as *ekātmapratyayasāram*? How do you grasp this Ātman? By knowing it that '*It Is' – asti-iti-eva-upalabdhnvyah*, as the Kaṭha Upanishad puts it. Know it as 'That which is', said Saint Augustine. What is the Reality of all realities? That which Is, the General Existence, *sattā-sāmānya, ekatmapratyayasaram*. This is Brahman.

Prapancopaśamam: Here all *samsāra*, all this tumult of creation, subsides, like waves sinking into the ocean, as dream is withdrawn into waking consciousness. The universe, in all its conditions – gross, subtle and causal – ceases here. In this state, there is neither the Virāt, nor Hiraṇyagarbha, nor Īsvara; because, there is no creation. This is the Ātman where there is neither waking, nor dreaming, nor sleep. Thus, it is called *prapancopaśamam*. It is not a condition; it is beyond all conditions. It is not a state of affairs. We do not know what it is. It is a mystery. Wonder of all wonders is this: Wonderful is that disciple who can comprehend it from the wonderful teacher who can teach this wonderful Being. *Āścaryavat paśyati, vadati, ṣrinoti*, says the Kaṭha Upanishad. What a glorious Being is it! The *prapanca*, this vast cosmos, ceases there, and That alone is, shining as the glorious Sun of all suns. It is *śāntam*: Peaceful is that state. No worries, no anxieties, no pains, no sufferings, no births and deaths, no agonies of any kind can be there. It is not the peace born of the absence of sound or the absence of contact with things. It is the peace which is positive in its nature. We say we are peaceful when nobody talks to us, none disturbs us, and we have everything that we want. This is not the peace of the Ātman, because our concept of peace in the world is purely negative and, again, relational. The Ātman is non-relational peace that cannot be put an end to by the passage of time. Our peace on earth has a beginning and an end. Today we are peaceful, tomorrow we are not. We cannot afford to be always peaceful. But the peace of the Ātman is eternal, and most blessed is that state. It is Śivam: It is the only thing that can be called really auspicious, designated by the most blessed terms, 'Om' and 'Atha'. Praṇava is its designation, in its Self-comprehensiveness. Advaitam: Non-dual is that state. We cannot even call it as the One. It is 'Not-two' – that is all; because, to say that it is one, would be to denote it by a numerical figure. It is not one, because there is nothing other than it. We can only say, 'it is not-two' – *advaita*. The Upanishad, after having said that it is *eka* (One), now says that it is *advaita* (Non-dual). We should not call it as one, or *eka*, because 'one' has a relation to 'two', 'three', 'four', etc. It is non-relational; therefore, we should not describe it even as one. It is 'not-this, not-this' – '*neti, neti*'. It is not this, and not that; not anything that we can think, or understand.

Caturtham manyante, sa ātmā: This is the fourth state of Consciousness, which is called the Ātman. It is called the fourth, not numerically, but in comparison with the three relative states of waking, dream and sleep. When you go to this fourth state, you do not feel that you are in a 'fourth state'. You are, then, in the only possible state. It is the transcendence of the three, not in a fourth, but in a numberless, figureless, quantityless, immeasurable Being. This is the Ātman. This is our essential nature, and the essential nature of all things. We are the Ātman, which does not wake, dream or sleep which does not restrict itself to the outer or the inner. The Ātman is the sole Being of all beings, Existence of all existences, '*sat*' of all '*sat*', ‘*chit*’ of all ‘*chit*’, ‘*ānanda*’ of all ‘*ānandas*’: - Supreme Existence-Consciousness-Bliss.

Sa vijñeyah: This is to be known. This is the purpose of life. We live here for this purpose, and we have no other aim in life. All our activities, all our business, all our functions, whatever they be, are conscious or unconscious attempts on our parts to realise the Ātman, and until and unless we reach the Ātman, we cannot be happy, we cannot be satisfied, and we cannot put an end to the cycle of birth and death. We are perpetually both and we perpetually die to train ourselves for attunement of our being with the Ātman. Births and deaths are processes of training in the field of experience. We experiment with the things of the world, with a view to visualising the Ātman in them, coming in contact with the Ātman in the objects. We love things because we hope that the Ātman is there in them, but we do not see it there because it is not in one place only. Why do we love things, love persons, love objects? Because we have a hope that the Ātman is there, and we go for it. We do not find it there, and so we go to another object – perhaps it is there – like the Gopis searching for Kriṣhna in different places. Kriṣhna! Are you here, are you there? You know, where; He is everywhere. The Gopis queried the trees, the plants, the bees and even the inanimate things. Have you seen Kriṣhna? Has Kriṣhna passed by this path? Where is Kriṣhna? Can you give an indication of Kriṣhna’s whereabouts? Madly did the Gopis ask of everything in creation, animate and inanimate. ‘Do you know Kriṣhna? Have you seen Him?’ In a similar manner, madly do we go after the things of the world. Is the Ātman here? Have you seen the Ātman? Can you get the Ātman here, there, in this, in that? It is nowhere! It is not in anything particularised, and, therefore, we cannot get the Ātman by any amount of search in the outer world of objects. So, all the loves of the world are futile in the end, and are bound to be frustrated, doomed to suffer, because of this erroneous approach to Reality made through the objects, to which Reality cannot be confined on account of their inherent structural defect. And, in this experimentation, we die. Life is too short. The experimentation does not end. In the next birth we do, again, experiment with things, because the objects in creation are infinite. We make infinite experiments, and the struggle goes on. This process is called samsāra, transmigration; and in all the lives that we take, in all the deaths that we pass through, the Ātman cannot be seen, just as the Gopis could not see Krişhna until He Himself made a Will to appear before them. Nobody could inform the Gopis as to where Krişhna was. 'I do not know: I do not know': this is what all the objects will tell you. What are we asking for, then? We have never seen it. And, considering this enigmatic situation of the quest for the Ātman, the Upanishad finally said that perhaps it can be realised only by him whom it chooses. You have to leave it to itself. You do not know how you can see it. There seems to be no means of knowing it. Nothing in the world can be a help to us in knowing it. *Yam eva eşha vrinute tena labhyah*: Whom it chooses, he alone can obtain it. This seems to be a solution arrived at by the sage of the Kaţha Upanishad. We are tired of the quest. And when the Gopis were fatigued in this arduous quest, when they became unconscious in their utter surrender to Krişhna, He revealed Himself. Now the time has come. The ego has gone; effort has ceased; one cannot do anything further; then He comes. You search, and search, and search, and you realise its futility. The ego realises its limitations, and it ceases. When you know your limitations, you cease from all egoistic effort, and the cessation of the ego is the revelation of the Ātman. God comes when the ego goes. When you are nowhere, He alone is everywhere. He takes the position of your personality. You vanish, and He comes in, not before that. When the personalities of the Gopis vanished, Kriṣhna took possession of their hearts, and instead of the Gopis being there; Kriṣhna was there. The *jīva* expires into Īsvara. This is the Ātman to be known, the Goal for which we live in this world. This is the fourth state Consciousness, the Ātman, the Absolute, Brahman.

THE ĀTMAN AS THE PRANAVA

The Ātman is the content of the meaning of Omkāra, with which the Upanishad commenced. This Om, which is All, the all-comprehensive. Name designates this All, which is the Ātman. The Ātman is the designated; Om, Praṇava, is the designator.

As there are three relative phases of the Ātman, there are the three relative phases of Om. A, U, M, are the three constitutive elements of Om. Just as waking, dream and sleep may be regarded as the constitutive elements of the manifested Form of the Ātman, Om, in its three-syllabled constitution, is manifested. *Pāda mātrā, matrāsca pādā*: The feet of the Ātman are the *mātrās* or the syllables of Om, and vice versa. The *mātrās* or the syllables are A, U, M, *akāra, ukāra, makāra iti.* So, *yamātmā-adhyaksharam*: The Ātman is the Overlord of this *akṣhara*, imperishable Om. *Adhimātram*: It is also the Lord over the three syllables, A, U, M, which may be compared with the three states described of the Ātman – *jāgarita* (waking), *svapna* (dream), *suṣhupti* (sleep). This Supreme Ātman as the designated is comparable with Om with its *mātrās*, A, U, M, and we have to learn now how these syllables are comparable with the three states. And, also, just as there is a fourth transcendent state beyond the three states of the Ātman, there is a transcendent state of Om, too, beyond the three syllables, A, U, M. As there are four states of consciousness, there are four states of Omkāra, each one, respectively, comparable with its corresponding counterpart.

What is the first state of the Ātman? It is Vaiśvānara. The Vaiśvānara, or Viśva, is the first manifestation of the Ātman, which can be compared with the first manifestation of the three-syllabled Praṇava, or Omkāra.

The *jāgaritasthāna*, or the waking condition of the Vaiśvānara, is the *prathamapāda*, or the first foot, of Praṇava or Om. *Jāgaritasthāno vaisvanar-okarah prathama matra*: The *jāgaritasthāna*, or the waking condition of the Ātman, called the Viśva, or Vaiśvānara, is the first syllable of Om – *akāra. Āpterādimatvadvā*: 'A' is comparable, in a very peculiar way, with the first phase of the Ātman. All states of consciousness, relatively speaking at least, begin with the waking state, in which the other states, viz. dream and sleep, may be said to be comprehended. From the point of view of the *jīva* – not from the point of view of Īsvara – the waking condition is the cause, and dream and sleep may be regarded as its effects. If dream is the effect of impressions of perceptions in the waking state, sleep is a condition in which all the unfulfilled impressions are wound up into a latent state, ready for manifestation, subsequently. In this sense, we may say that the waking state is the beginning of the other states. Likewise, 'A' is the beginning of all letters, the first syllable in the series of letters in the alphabet; and in this *akāra* all other word-formations are said to be contained, because the moment you open your mouth to speak, the sensation is towards the utterance of 'A'. And, thus, it is regarded by the Upanishad as the beginning of word-formation. This beginning of word-formation is compared with the beginning of experiences in consciousness, which is the waking state. This condition of the Ātman in the waking state is comparable, therefore, with *akāra*, the first syllable of Omkāra. And the Upanishad also says that by meditation on this harmony between akāra of Om and the waking state of the Ātman, one achieves the fulfilment of all desires – *āpnoti ha vai sarvān kāmān*. One becomes, also, the foremost among all persons, and almost the beginning of all things in the sense that everything comes to that person, even uncalled for – *ādisca bhavati*. This achievement of the yogin by meditation is described, also, in the Chhāndogya Upanishad in the context of the description of a technique called the Vaiśvānara Vidyā. Though the Māndūkya Upanishad is very brief in its description of Vaiśvānara, the Chhāndogya Upanishad goes into great detail by way of a clarification of the *vidyā*, or meditation, on the Vaiśvānara. By a meditation on this Cosmic State of the Ātman, called Vaiśvānara, the yogin achieves a power which cannot be faced by anything else in the world, and everything comes to him without his asking for them. Real power is that which summons things even without expressing it in words. You do not tell a person, 'do it'; he simply does it. And that is the height of all power. This is achieved by meditation on the Vaiśvānara. *Ya evam veda*: One who knows this secret of meditation on the harmony between *akāra* and the waking state of the Ātman, who meditates on the Vaiśvānara-ātman as designated by the first phase, or syllable of Omkāra, becomes a master over all things, a perfected Siddha does he become, and he is an adept in yoga. This is in relation to the waking state, *jāgaritasthāna* which is Vaiśvānara, *prathamapāda, akāra*, which brings about a result of this nature, when one resorts to meditation in this manner.

Now, the Upanishad proceeds further to a comparison of the second syllable of Omkāra, namely 'U', with the second phase of the manifested Ātman, namely, Taijasa.

Ukāra is the second syllable of Om, which can be compared with the second *pāda* or foot of the Ātman. The *ukāra* is regarded as *utkarṣha* or elevated in the sense that it is beyond *akāra*, proceeds after *akāra*. In the series of the letters of the alphabet, 'U' comes after, as an effect, as it were, of the pronunciation of *akāra*; and while *akāra* may be regarded as the commencement of language, *ukāra* is the middle of all vowel-formations. When you utter 'U', you find that the middle of the throat begins to function. It is elevated, symbolically, says the Upanishad, in the sense that it is above *akāra* in the process of word-formation. So also is *taijasa* or dream-consciousness that comes afterwards as an effect of the waking experience; proceeding from the waking experience, existing midway between waking and sleep. Ubhayatvādvā; It is *ubhaya*, or both, in the sense that it has two sides, namely, waking and sleep, from the point of view of the *pādas* of the Ātman, and it is between *akāra* and *makāra*, from the point of view of the mātrās, or syllables, of Omkāra. Thus we can compare, in meditation, *ukāra* with *taijasa*, the dreaming consciousness. These comparisons are made by the Upanishad to help one in meditation, so that one can bring Omkāra in juxtaposition with the states of the Ātman. All these comparisons are symbolic, and we should not take them literally. All meditations are symbolic; all *vidyās* of the Upanishads are symbolic, as the comparison of Brahman to the rope and the world to the snake seen in the rope, in the analogy of the snake-in-the-rope, is symbolic. When you say, Brahman is like the rope, it does not mean that Brahman is long like the rope. The analogy is limited to the symbology intended; and likewise we have to take this comparison as a symbology to help meditation on the unity of all names and forms, comprehended in the unity of Omkāra with the Ātman in all its phases. Thus, *ukāra* being elevated above *akāra*, existing midway between *akāra* and *makāra*, is comparable with the dreaming state, which is elevated above the waking state as an effect of it, and exists between the waking and the deep sleep states. *Utkarṣhati ha vai jñāna-santatim*: And one who meditates in this manner, rises in his status of knowledge. As ‘U’ is raised over ‘A’, and dream is raised over waking, the knowledge of the meditator rises above all the ordinary informative understanding of the schools of thought. He becomes a real knower, a *jñānin*, by a meditation on the unity of *ukāra* with the *taijasa*. *Samānasca bhavati*: Just as there is an equilibrating effect of *taijasa* in relation to the waking and sleep states, in the sense that it is conscious like waking, and yet not externally conscious in the same sense, just as there is an equalising effect of *ukāra* between *akāra* and *makāra*, one who meditates thus becomes an equalising factor in society and in all creation. One becomes a harmonising element everywhere. There is no conflict in one’s mind, then, and one does not create conflict in society when established in this meditation. One has peace within oneself, and creates peace outside, too, on account of the radiance of peace emanating from oneself. The meditator becomes a spontaneous peace-maker. His existence itself is a peace-making. He need not say anything in the world. In his presence, conflict cannot arise, and turmoil ceases, vexations and emotional tensions come to a close on account of meditation practised thus as an equalising factor of consciousness between waking and deep sleep through the syllable ‘U’ of *ukāra*, says the Upanishad. Not only that; *nāsyābrahmavit kule bhavati* – so purifying is this meditation, such an effect it has upon the meditator and all those connected with him, that in his family no one who does not know Brahman can be born. He will have only Brahmavids in his family on account of the effect of this meditation. His blood gets purified so much, the very cells of his body are charged with this super-physical knowledge to such an extent, that an idiot child cannot be born to him. What is a child after all? It is you, yourself, reborn. *Ātmā vai putranāmā asi*: You yourself are reborn, as your child, in some other form; and your knowledge will be communicated to the child, and because of this meditation, when it takes effect, you become flooded with knowledge; you become knowledge itself. Rather, it is not your body that is reborn; it is knowledge that is reborn. You do not merely pass on the chromosomes or blood-cells in the birth of a child, but you pass knowledge. You get inundated with spiritual knowledge to such an extent that you cease to he a mere physical body. The physical body vibrates as a body of knowledge. Such is the power of this knowledge. The family is nothing but the generation of your children, which, the Upanishad says, should be one of knowledge alone. Therefore, your generation, your posterity shall be a series, not of bodily children, but children of knowledge – *amritasya putrāh*. Such is the glory of this meditation.

There is, then, the comparison between *makāra* and the deep sleep state of consciousness. *Suṣhuptasthānah prājño makārastritiya mātrā*: *Makāra* is the third *mātrā* of Om, and it is comparable with *prājña*, the third state, causal, of the Ātman. *Miterapītervā*: It is the measure of all things, and it is the dissolver of all things. When we chant Om, *akāra* and *ukāra* merge in *makāra*, as all the impressions of waking and dream merge in *prājña*, deep sleep, the causal state. Just as you end the chant with *makāra*, you end all experience in deep sleep; and as you can repeat the chant subsequent to the closure of the recitation by *makāra*, waking life commences once again as an offshoot of the deep sleep state, which is the cause of waking. Deep sleep can be called the cause of waking in one sense, the effect of it in another sense. The waking is due to the agitation of the unfulfilled impressions lying buried in the deep sleep state. In this sense we may say that waking is an effect of the state of deep sleep. Deep sleep is the cause, and all experiences in waking and dream are its effects. As Īsvara is the cause of all things, the deep sleep state seems to be the cause of our waking and dreaming, in one sense, namely, that we wake up from sleep on account of unfulfilled desires. If all our desires are fulfilled, we would not be waking up from sleep, at all. Why should we wake up? What is the purpose? There is something unfulfilled, unexecuted, and therefore we wake up. The *prārabdha-karma* agitates, urges us into activity, wakes us up into the world of objects. Thus, in one sense, *prājña* (sleep) is the cause of experience through Viśva (waking) and Taijasa (dreaming). But, in another sense, *prājña* may be regarded as the effect, because *prājña* is nothing but that state of consciousness where all the impressions, unfulfilled, unmanifested, lie latent, and these impressions are nothing but the consequences of perception and experience in the waking state. In that sense, the condition of deep sleep is an effect of waking. *makāra* is of that nature in Om. We may say that the chant commences with *makāra* or closes with *makāra*, as in the series of chants of Om. Just as we can have a series of chants or recitations of *praṇava*, we have a series of wakings and sleepings, and wakings and sleepings. The sleep state measures (*miteh*) all things in the sense that the waking and dreaming experiences are determined by the impressions that are there as *sanchita-karma* in the *ānandamaya-koṣha* (causal state), manifesting itself in the sleep state. The *sanchita-karmas* are those group of unfulfilled *samskāras* and *vāsanas* which are there in the state of deep sleep, *prājña*, and which sprout forth shoots in the form of experiences in waking and dream. In this sense we measure our experiences in terms of tendencies present in the deep sleep state. The dream and the waking experiences are measured by the potencies already present in the state of sleep, as unfulfilled *vāsanas* and *samskāras*. It is, therefore, the measure (*miti*) of experience. And, so is *makāra* regarded as the container of the processes of chants. Just as the contained is supported by the container, *akāra* and *ukāra* seem to be contained in *makāra* with which one closes the chant. Just as all experiences get submerged in the deep sleep state, even as all our efforts cease when we go to sleep, the recitation of Praṇava ceases when *makāra* commences. 'A' and 'U', merge themselves in 'M'. *Minoti ha vā idam sarvam*: One, who meditates thus, has the capacity to measure all things, that is, to know everything – he becomes *sarvajña*. He becomes Īsvara Himself. He becomes the measure of all things; he becomes the yardstick for the cognition of everything in creation. Everything is referred to him; he does not refer himself to other things. He becomes the reference for the whole of creation, the centre of all experience in the cosmos. *Apītisca bhavati*: Everything merges in him; as the verse in the second chapter of the Bhagavad-Gītā says, everything enters into him, as rivers enter the ocean. Īsvara is the Merger of all creation, and when you become Īsvara, the whole creation merges in you. You realise this state by this meditation on the unity of *makāra* and *prājña*, the causal state of Praṇava and the causal state of Consciousness, both individually and cosmically.

Now, as there are three relative conditions of the Ātman: *jāgrat, svapna* and *suṣhupti* – waking, dream and deep sleep – *akāra, ukāra*, and *makāra* of Praṇava, or Omkāra, may be regarded as its relative conditions. But, just as there is a transcendent state of the Ātman which has been described as: *nāntah-prājñam, na bahih prājñam, no-'bhayatah-prājñam,* etc., there is a transcendent condition of Praṇava, or Omkāra, which is not constituted of *mātrās* or syllables, but is *amātra*, without any measure or syllable. Even as we cannot designate the Ātman as either this or that, so we cannot specify this *amātra* condition of Om as either this or that. It is a vibration of being, and not a state of sound, and there is no material content in this vibration. It transcends the physical, the subtle and the causal states, and it is not even merely the vibration which sets creation in motion. It is subtler than even the causal vibration with which creation commenced. The only word the Upanishad uses to name this state is *amātra*, immeasurable. As the Ātman is ungraspable, unrelatable, indescribable, unthinkable, so is this *amātra* condition of Omkāra measureless in every way.

This Om, in its fourth or transcendent state, is Ātman itself. There is a soundless state of Praṇava that is Existence itself. All sounds and vibrations merge into Existence, and Existence is One. We may call it Praṇava in its *amātra* state or as Ātman in its indescribable state of Being. Pure Existence is the merging together of Praṇava and the Ātman. *Amātrascaturthah avyavahāryah*: The fourth state of Praṇava is that with which we cannot have any dealings, as with objects, words or sounds, such as in connection with usages in language. *Prapancopaśamah*: All the world of sound ceases here in this soundless state of Praṇava. *Sivo'dvaitah*: It is most auspicious, blessed and non-dual like the Ātman, because it is The Ātman. Omkāra *ātmaiva*: This Omkāra which is soundless, transcendent, is the Ātman itself. It is another name for the Ātman. Creation and the Creator become one here. The merger of Om in the Ātman is the merger of creation in the Absolute. There is no creatorship also, because there is no created. There is no sound that is supposed to be the first vibration of creation. Sound reaches the soundless state. It becomes, then, relationless. *Samviśatyatmanātmānam*: One who knows this secret, by deep meditation, enters the Ātman by the Ātman. We do not enter the Ātman by a gate, we enter the Ātman by the Ātman. We do not enter the Ātman; *the Ātman enters the Ātman*. We do not exist. We evaporate into the Ātman, and *the Ātman becomes the Ātman*. Sounds merge in Praṇava; it becomes the Ātman. *The Ātman alone is*. When the Ātman becomes the Ātman through the Ātman, it is called *ātmasākshātkāra* – realisation of the Ātman. It is also *brahmasākshātkāra* – realisation of Brahman. From the point of view of the Ātman animating the individual states, we call this achievement *ātmasākshātkāra*. From the standpoint of this very same Ātman animating the whole cosmos, we call it *brahmasākshātkāra*. It is Self-realisation and God-realisation at one and the same time. It is Existence, it is Consciousness, it is Power, it is Bliss, it is Perfection, it is Immortality, it is *mokṣha*, it is *kaivalya*. This is the Goal of life, the path to which is beautifully described in the Māndūkya Upanishad.

The Māndūkya is the essence of all the Upanishads, a study and assimilation of which, alone, is sufficient to lead one to emancipation, *māndūkyamekamevālam mumukṣhūnam vimuktaye*: For the liberation of the seeker, the Māndūkya Upanishad, alone, is adequate, if it is properly digested into experience. You should not merely listen to it, and then forget it. You have listened to an exposition of the glorious meaning of the Māndūkya Upanishad, and I wish that you absorb it into your minds and make it a part of your practical life. Let this knowledge which is so rare, so difficult to acquire, not go to waste. Do not throw it to the winds or to the wilderness. Even if you cry aloud, it would be hard for you to gain this knowledge.

It is such a rare asset in this world; and when you get it, do not lose it, and do not forget that you have it. Imbibe it by deep reflection, make it a practical means of your living in this world, so that your life may be converted into Divine Life, so that you may become veritable divinities walking on this earth, spreading peace everywhere by your very existence, so that you may become *bhūdevas*, gods on earth. He is a real *brāhmaṇa* who knows this secret, who has this knowledge, who lives this knowledge, and to whom this knowledge is practice, to whom action is not different from having this knowledge where *karma* and *jñāna* come together in a fraternal embrace, where there is no friction between work and contemplation, where life becomes realisation, where work becomes worship and God-consciousness, where one's very existence becomes a blessedness to all earth, where one's life on earth becomes a teaching, where example becomes a precept, and where one becomes a representative of Īsvara in this world. This is the grand Gospel of the Māndūkya Upanishad, and my prayer to the Almighty is that He may bless you all with a remembrance of this knowledge, that you may not forget it throughout your daily living, a wonderful knowledge, as the Chhāndogya Upanishad says, which should not be equated with even the treasures of the whole earth. This knowledge is greater than the wealth of all the world, a saviour of humanity from the thraldom of finite life, a direct means to *mokṣha*, Immortal Existence, the great Goal of your lives.